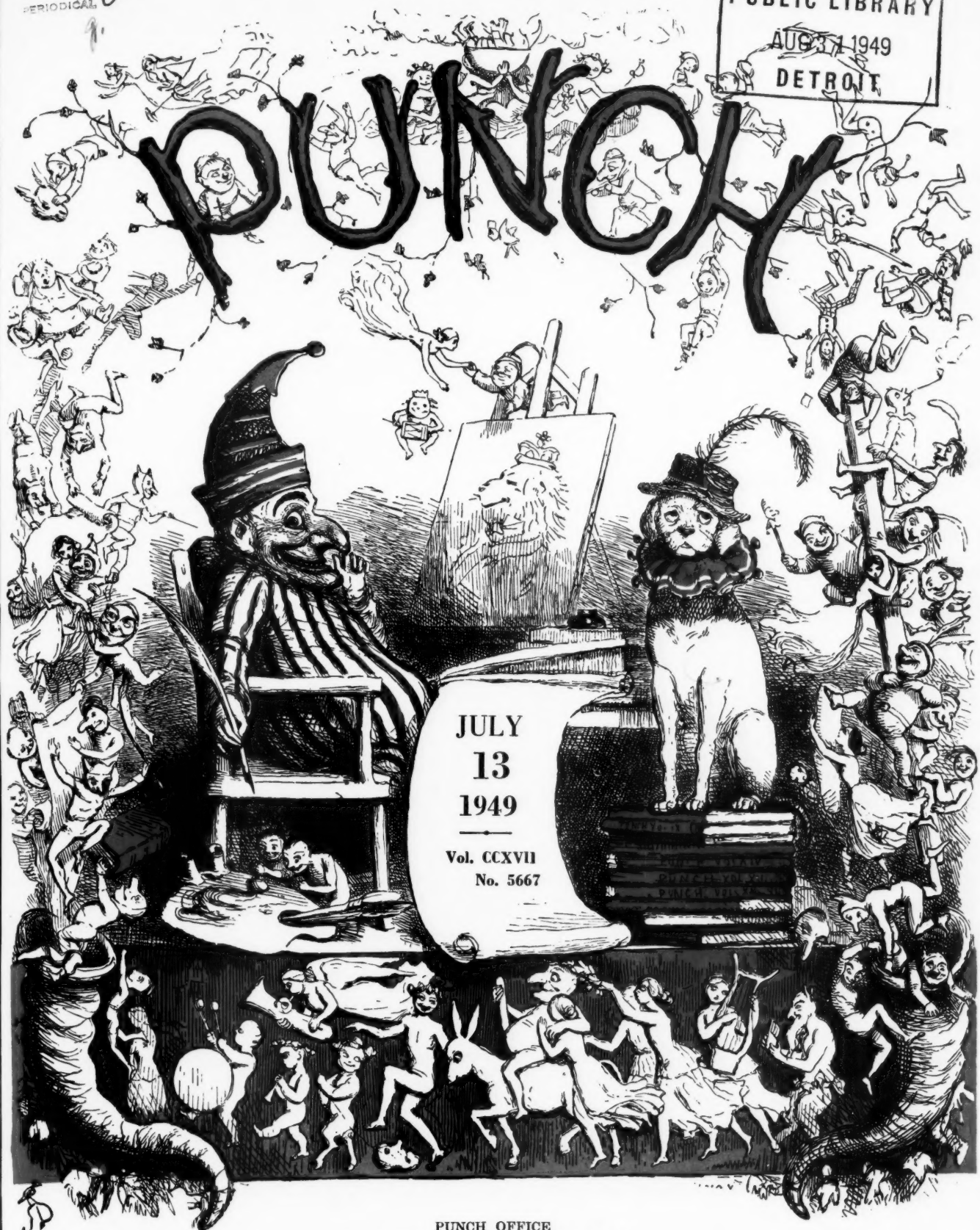


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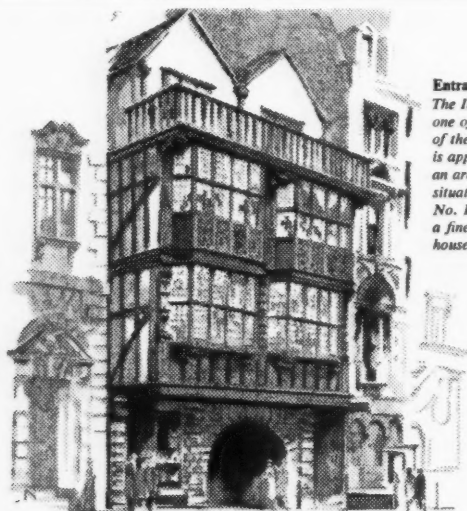
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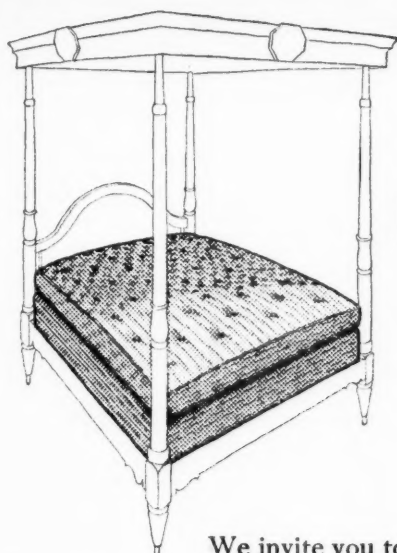
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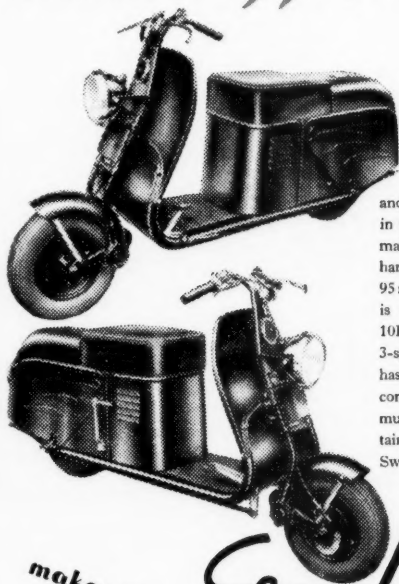
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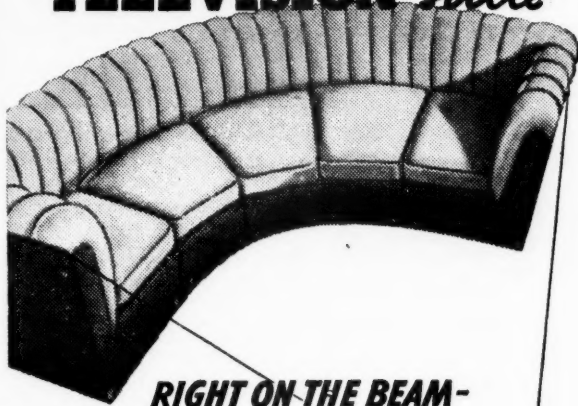
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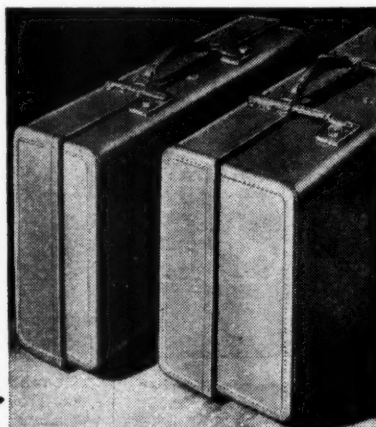
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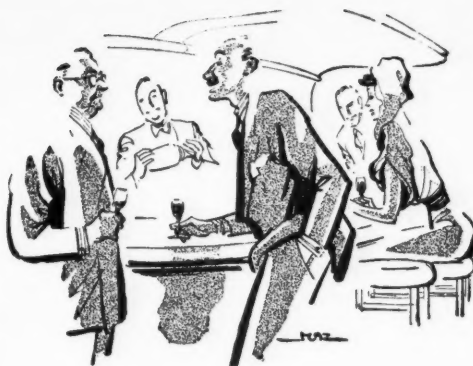
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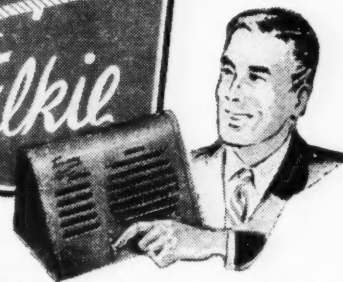
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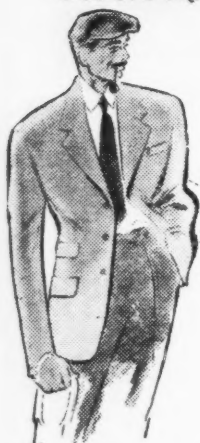
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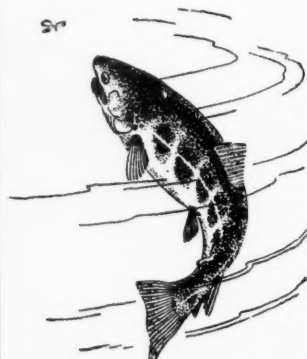
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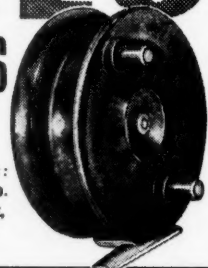


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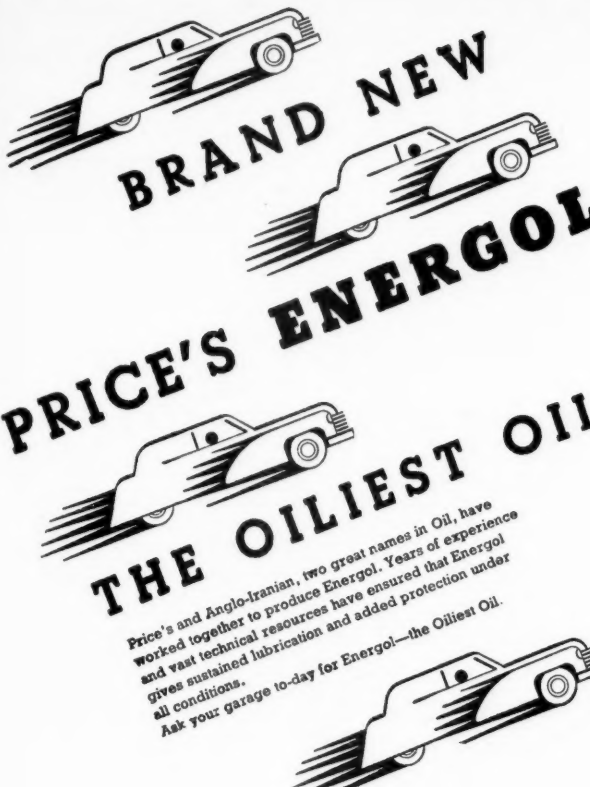
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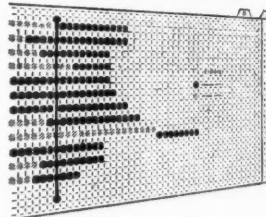


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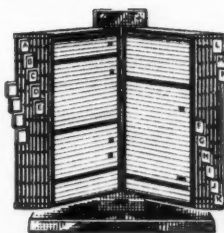


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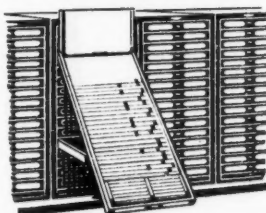


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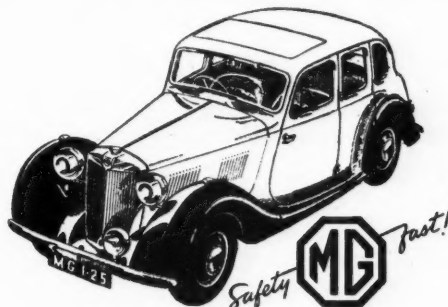
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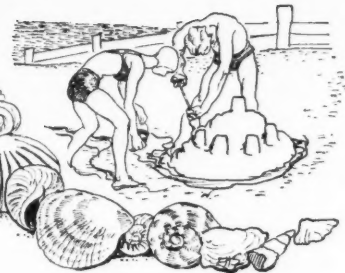
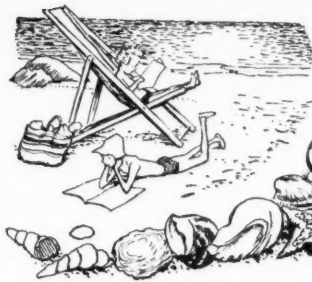


ERVEN LUCAS BOLS
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On

the London Charivari



CHARIVARIA

HEARING that the National Debt has reached the figure of £25,620,762,603, an old lady has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggesting a whist-drive.

"Before using a mower on your lawn, be sure to sharpen each blade carefully," says a gardening expert. What with? A scythe?



"Yardley kept going to lunch..."—Cricket report in "Evening Standard"

It's that five shillings maximum, of course.

Housewives are urging that the B.B.C. should help to solve the domestic service problem by broadcasting at a peak listening hour a programme called "Housemaids' Choice."

A Guildhall speaker says that modern youth would fight for freedom just as strenuously as its forbears. If only out of curiosity to see what it's like.

A boy in the Midlands charged with stealing a penny-farthing bicycle was said to have been wearing false whiskers. It is thought that he had come under the baneful influence of the magic-lantern.



"The B.B.C. Effects Department," says a magazine article, "can give a fairly accurate reproduction of any kind of thunderstorm." Yes, but have they any thunderstorms that sound like letters being opened?

"I cannot have my holiday till the end of September, and then I want to take my wife to the sun. We would prefer to fly. Have you any suggestions?"—"Sunday Times"

Well, you could try the Inter-Planetary Society.

It is reported from New York that a member of a dance band was prevented from playing because his instrument was jammed for two hours in a turnstile. Turnstiles are not, however, included in the list of commodities available under the European Recovery Programme.



"Young man, personality, seeks post manager high-class restaurant. Fully experienced. Also with stage and concert pianist. Would entertain partnership."

Advt. in "Daily Telegraph"

Yes, but there are the customers to think of.

The price of wiping rags has now been freed from Government control. This means that garage mechanics will no longer need to use steering wheels.



OFFICIAL NOTICE

WHO are these merry men proud and strong?
 What is their lovely load?
 Singing a stave as they march along
 Dull care be blowed, be blowed!
 Without any warning they came this morning
 And the whole air thrills to the sound of drills
 Outside my small abode.
 They are men of a type that is sound and
 ripe
 They are umber skinned by the sun and wind
 Ambition is their goad,
 They are laying a pipe from the reservoir,
 From the reservoir up the road,
 Gravel and tar their good friends are,
 There is one tattooed with woad.
 And what do they care for Stafford Cripps
 As the music breaks from their open lips
 As gay as the lark in the heavens is,
 Not to be stilled till the hole is drilled,

Not to be stayed till the pipe is laid,
 Or they pause for their long elevenses.
 Exuberant men
 I raise my pen,
 What do you reckon of the dollar gap
 Or any old heck that happens to hap,
 Your brows in the sunshine wiping?
 It does me good and I would, I would
 I were one of you fellows with lungs like bellows
 Rattling the windows with right good will
 And striving to drown the voice of the drill
 With the clamour of your sweet piping,
 And knowing no master and no lord
 Save the Metropolitan Water Board,
 Whose note in language stately
 Dropped in my letter-box to say
 (Some five hours after the affray)
 That the water would be turned off to-day
 Does not surprise me greatly. EVOE

UNFAIR TO FLIES

OUT of the blue this morning
 came a song. It was a
 poignant ballad that my
 grandmother used to sing to me
 when I was getting under her feet
 many years ago. It went like this:
 Baby bye, there's a fly;
 Let us watch him you and I.
 There he goes on his toes,
 Tickling baby's nose.

Notice how the leisure of Victorian times makes itself felt, even in these first short lines! There is no panic, no rushing for the fly-swat, but a pleasurable anticipation of something diverting, maybe of educational value, to beguile the tedium of a summer afternoon.

Remark too the innocent amusement expressed in the last couplet. Lucky baby, sings grandma, wagging a roguish finger—see how fond the fly is of you! Not a bit afraid, is he? If baby sits quite, quite still, the dear little fly may walk right round baby's face!

Maiden Aunt Ethel, who holds advanced views on hygiene, may mutter something about germs at this juncture, but is sharply put down. Germs, Ethel, germs? Never heard of them! In any case, what have germs to do with flies? This is what comes of extensive reading. One should not believe all one reads.

And in any case there are two dozen sheets that need sides to middling!
 Let us go on with our song:

I believe with those six legs
 You and I could walk on eggs.
 Catch him—no! Let him go!
 Do not hurt him so.

The educational pill is being administered here very neatly.

How many legs, dear?

Six, grandma.

(Clever child—takes after our side of the family!)

Would you say that a fly is light on its feet?

Exceptionally so, grandma. It is an acknowledged fact that a fly can walk on an egg without so much as bruising it.

Kindness to animals, even the smallest, is being stressed in the last two lines. Yes, I have no doubt that this verse was the one that meant most to my grandmother, but my favourite was always the next and last one.

Now you see his wings of silk
 Dabbling in the baby's milk.
 Fie, oh fie! You foolish fly!
 How will you get dry?

With what pleasure grandma and I watch his antics in my mug. Oh dear, he has slipped! Help him

out, child—carefully now; do not hurt him so! That's better—a tragedy is averted!

At this time of year hundreds of daily papers are mutilated in delivering the death-blow to nearly as many innocent flies. Strong men with their eyes bulging force up their blood pressure every time a fly buzzes near them. Scores of mothers are scaring the wits out of themselves just because a fly alights on the pram-cover. All over the world people of various colours are recalling the enormous model fly at South Kensington which gorges for ever on ham (I think—but that may be a figment of a disordered subconscious and I am open to correction), and are terrifying themselves and their families with its horrid lesson.

For these reasons I feel that it is salutary in our nerve-racked times to return to the happy germ-ignorant past, if only for a moment. Sing my grandmother's soothing ditty as you go about the fly-ridden world and you will recapture that peace of mind and tranquillity of outlook which comes from showing tenderness and toleration to the most maligned member of the insect world.

Get away, you little pest!



GIVE US THE ORDERS . . .

"All right, then—tell me exactly what I'm to *do*."



"ANOTHER complaint, Rogers?"

BEWARE OF THE TARANTULA

SO they have found another snake on a commercial aeroplane.

This brings to something like half-a-dozen the number of cases reported this year where long-distance aircraft have been invaded by some kind of extraneous livestock. There have been a lion-cub and a baby elephant, and in one glorious week two wagon-loads of monkeys—a wilderness (that is the correct noun of assembly) of baboons in one instance and in the other, less convincingly, a wilderness of "light-green rhesus monkeys." As a spectacle, the rhesus monkeys have probably put up the year's best show so far; the thrilling climax where they found their way into the pilot's cockpit and the pilot, glancing at his instruments, found a monkey glaring at him over (or was it through?) the instrument-panel was especially sensational. But the baboons did not do so badly; they added an extra spice of excitement

to their performance by turning up over the middle of the Atlantic, and, according to the account I saw, finished the flight sitting up one to each window of the aeroplane—or rather to each window but one, the last being occupied by a small dog. Anyone who has ever seen the demeanour of a pack of baboons confronted by a small dog, or *vice versa*, will know just how much trust to place in this report.

One gets a curious feeling that in giving so much publicity to these intrusions into their aircraft the air lines are making a conscious effort to compete with the shipping companies. The escaped tiger or gorilla that terrifies the passengers and crew until cornered in the fo'c'sle and despatched by the intrepid first mate is a stock silly-season story; only a week or two ago there was a jaguar loose in the South Atlantic. The introduction of similar entertainments in the air was to be expected sooner or later.

When you think it over, it is clear that the air people have been working up to it for some time. They began with mice some years ago. Just as rats infest the nether parts of ships, so it is not unreasonable to allow their smaller and more portable relations house-room among the floorboards of aeroplanes, where no doubt they live on the crumbs from the passengers' sandwiches. Interest in airborne mice reached such a pitch at one time that there was actually a correspondence in *The Times*; it turned, as far as I remember, on whether they would need parachutes in the event of their falling out. That was in the days before the paper shortage.

Whether disinfestation experts have now cleared the skies of mice, or whether they are so common in aeroplanes these days that they do not even earn a couple of lines in the papers, I cannot say; they certainly seem to have disappeared entirely in favour of more exotic creatures.

This latest snake was found at Sydney airfield; it was described as being "a viper or a cobra." Mere amateurs of snakes like you and me might think the two varieties hard to confuse; the viper, as we are reminded every summer in the evening newspapers, is about eighteen inches long, with a zig-zag pattern running down the back and a prominent V-shaped mark on the head, whereas the cobra, if you can trust the illustrations to *The Jungle Book*, grows to a good six feet and has a wide flat hood behind the head bearing a design that might have been a study for Hans Arp's surrealist painting "Nez et Moustache."

However, it is quite likely that the discoverer of this particular ophidian did not mean that it was literally a viper or a cobra; probably, being a sensible man, he did not get near enough to know whether it was a slow-worm or a boa-constrictor. You can easily reconstruct his statement, inserting the standard Australian adjective where indicated:

"Hey, digger, where are you going?"

"Away from that — aeroplane. There's a — snake in it."

"What sort of — snake?"

"Hell, man, I don't know. A — cobra, I should think."

"Ah, stow it, chum; how could it be a — cobra?"

"Well, a — viper, then. What's the difference?"

And from his point of view, indeed, there is none.

No one, according to the Press account, knows where the snake got on; I am prepared to bet that no one knows *how* it got on, either. Usually the arrival of jungle denizens in the cabin is the result of faulty packing; a bored lion-cub in a crate in the freight compartment can hardly be blamed for wanting to find a way into the comparatively friendly atmosphere of the passengers' section. But in this case the snake just appeared—like a mushroom in the night, only longer.

Surely it could never have made the ascent, difficult enough for humans, of those tricky little aluminium steps? Did it climb through the hole where the tail wheel is parked? Was it blown

in by the wash of the airscrews? There was a time when one would have said instinctively that it came in with a bunch of bananas. Bunches of bananas are well known by all who have had experience in handling them to contain endless varieties of venomous creatures—vipers, cobras, tarantulas, black mambas, and so on. Nowadays, however, one feels that one would be more likely to find a banana in a bunch of cobras—and thankful for it at that.

Perhaps the airways people have something like this at the back of their minds when they hand out publicity about their flying menageries. Last week, you can imagine them saying, it was a couple of ferrets and a fer-de-lance; but next week—who knows?—you may find a brace of partridges or a hare.

If this is what they are after,

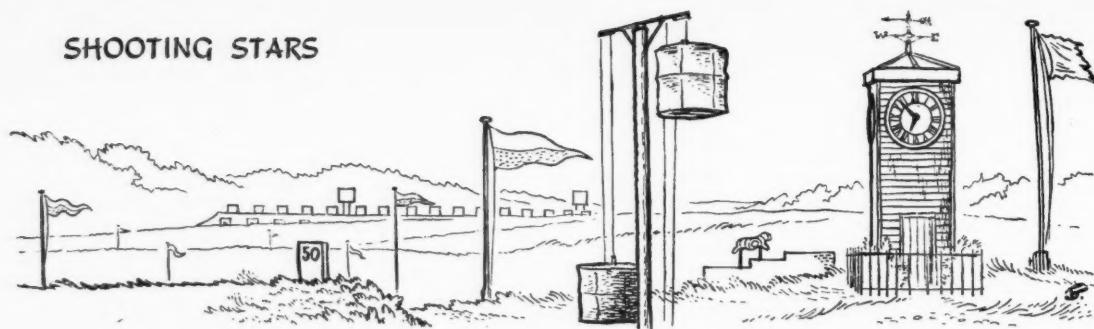
they should try to avoid such a prevalence of really noxious creatures. I for one will never again take my seat in a transcontinental aeroplane without first searching the cushion for scorpions and examining the floor for signs of snakes, spiders, and so on. Long before we are air borne I visualize grim scenes in which herds of buffalo storm up and down the cabin, women run screaming from the snapping jaws of a Gila monster, and the captain of the aircraft demands urgently whether there is a lion-tamer in the house.

The air lines claim in their advertisements, perhaps with the recent railway strikes in mind, that they take you there *and bring you back*. It would be reassuring if they made it quite clear that they bring you back alive.

B. A. YOUNG



SHOOTING STARS



IN the middle of a great heath in the north-west corner of Surrey lies a small self-contained empire inhabited by a race so picturesque and individual, so fascinating in their behaviour, that it is a matter for surprise that anthropologists ever trouble to go abroad. As does not always obtain in remote territories, the people are very gentle and hospitable and go out of their way to make their conversation

intelligible to the stranger. This empire looks like a Victorian Western, sounds like the Battle of Waterloo, and is called Bisley. It is the realm of the National Rifle Association, and if you are reading this article hot from the press then the final week of the Association's eightieth annual meeting will be poised on the verge of high drama . . .

The whole business started not far from the old windmill on Wimbledon Common in July, 1860, when Queen Victoria pulled a silk cord and, to everyone's surprise, scored a bull at four hundred yards. The idea of the N.R.A. sprang from the *Tir Federal* of Switzerland, and its aim was to stimulate the Volunteers. In fact it did, but pretty quickly rifle-shooting caught on as a sport. Wimbledon became a resort

of fashion, although betting was and is still barred by the N.R.A., and, drawn by the Queen's Prize, shooting men began to flock from all over the Empire. By 1890 the ranges were too small, and a move was made to Bisley . . .

The camp itself is on a slight rise, finely treed. Across it stretch the tents of the markers drafted in from the Services for the meeting, and of competitors, and in the centre are the offices of the N.R.A., from which a complex organization is controlled that seems to run like clockwork. (More than one hundred and fifty competitions have

to be shot off during the fortnight. For the King's Prize alone there are well over a thousand entrants. Shooting goes on for nearly eleven hours a day. Translate these figures into terms of administration and the headache can almost be heard.) Down the hill runs the Bazaar, where everything to do with shooting can be bought, except a good eye. And on the side of the mound towards the ranges lie comfortable bungalow clubhouses full of arm-chairs and of cheerful ballistical dispute audible in the evening as far as Pirbright. These clubhouses are by no means architectural gems, but their wide, rose-covered verandahs and shady gardens add up very pleasantly . . .

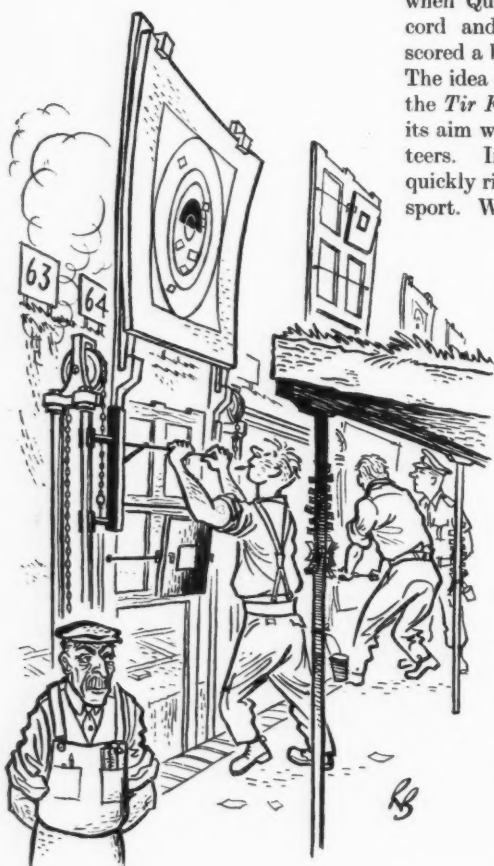
"We'll start with Stickledown," says our guide, a pleasant Army captain.

This is the long-distance range, up to 1200 yards. As we trudge to it through thick sand we pass characters dressed in the most fabulous manner. In this weather Bisley is like a pressure cooker, but most of them wear several tattered coats and large hats bound down tightly at the sides like horses' blinkers.

"Why so swaddled?" we ask.

"Partly psychological," explains our guide—"the feeling that you must isolate yourself at all costs; and partly protection against recoil and the effect on the sling of the pulse in the left arm."

Whatever the reason, they look wonderful. Beards are not in evidence, which is probably a hangover from the muzzle-loader's anxieties for his southern fringes; but Bisley is a moustache-collector's paradise, beside which Fighter Command seems so much stubble . . .



An eccentricity (is it confined to Canadians?) is the wearing of club insignia on the back instead of the chest or arm—presumably so that the badges are not lost to view when the wearer is in the orthodox firing position. Firing positions, however, may be anything but orthodox. At Stickledown we find gentlemen lying on their backs in contorted attitudes suggestive of a street accident, peering through the telescopic sights of match-rifles (.303) balanced between their knees. The targets, a thousand yards away, look tiny, but after each shot the black square comes up at the bottom right-hand corner of the scoring dummy to signal a bull . . .

The Running Deer (for which Landseer drew a life-size sketch) is not being harried at the moment, and now our guide takes us down behind the targets into the butt of the Century range (up to 600 yards) to watch the real work being done. Anyone who has shot at Bisley knows that whatever goes wrong on the range is always the marker's fault. To see him on the job makes you think again. The wooden frames warp terribly in the sun, and the lifting machinery, some of it from Wimbledon, isn't light. In the timed competitions all the hundred targets of the Century must go up and down as one. These markers are fit young Servicemen, but by the end of a period (three and a half hours) they have had enough . . .

"Come and meet the G.O.M.," says the Captain, and we walk down the butt. Mr. Lopez came to Bisley as a boy in 1890 and retired last year from being the master-craftsman responsible for the targets. His heart and soul are in the place, and his memories of its glories unflinching. He has been succeeded by his son, and Mr. Lopez Junior, who has only been at Bisley for twenty-three years, is regarded by everyone as a most promising youngster . . .

Squatting behind the 600-yard firing-point of the Century watching a long row of prone figures banging

away, the sound coming sharply back in ragged bursts, we decide that the ranges, with their orderly lines of targets capped by the famous little clock-tower and broken by the gaily-dipping wind-flags, are rather beautiful. But the secret of Bisley's spell, that brings men and women week-end after week-end, meeting after meeting, goes beyond that. It is clearly too static a sport to attract great crowds (the Ashburton following is the brightest, that of the King's Prize the most knowledgeable), but it is a good deal more dramatic than you might think. The final stage of a big competition produces a tension in which the act of breathing seems an intrusion.

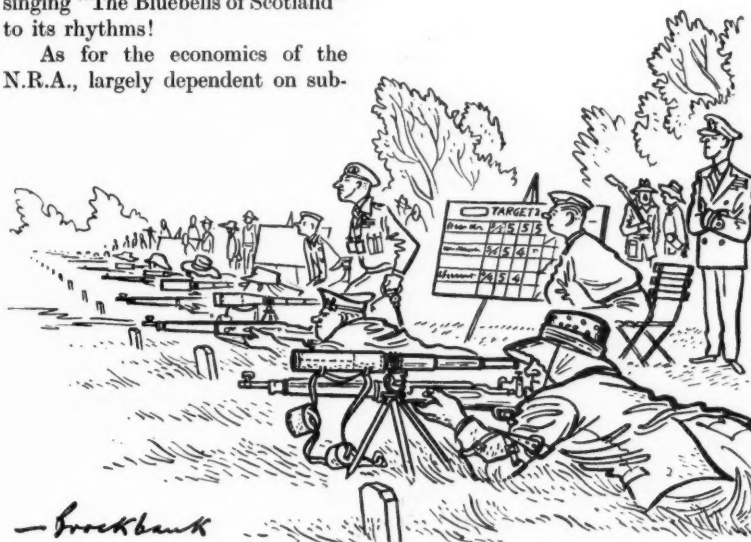
Also, although the rifle is a military weapon and many Servicemen compete, there is a happy absence of regimentation; everything is very friendly, very informal, very democratic, and even at the top there is room for charming eccentricities. Take a winner of the King's Prize whom Mr. Punch's Artist and I have met, who sits up until five on the morning of a big shoot to make certain he is quite relaxed, and an ex-Champion of the Army who admitted that he judges a cross-wind by looking at the mirage through a blurred telescope and singing "The Bluebells of Scotland" to its rhythms!

As for the economics of the N.R.A., largely dependent on sub-

scriptions and up against soaring costs, they are naturally chequered. If entrance fees for competitions (out of which considerable money prizes have to be found—no fiddling amateur status here) were put up, and if shooting and messing became too expensive, there would be a risk that young people might turn their backs on Bisley. That would be disastrous, from the national as well as the sporting point of view.

There are many other aspects of this alluring place of which I feel I should tell you, such as pistols and clay-pigeons and the monstrous weapon introduced by the Swiss to our competitions, called a Free Rifle, which weighs nineteen pounds and is fired standing and gets its name, one imagines, from the impossibility of charging for it. I might add that the Navy has a small Wren Third Officer whose shooting is the talk of the club, that since the war the R.A.F. is rapidly overtaking the other Services, and that the peep-sight seems entirely to have supplanted the open variety. But the piece of information I believe you may treasure most is the fact that in 1908 the Russian team arrived several days late for the Olympic Games at Bisley owing to an imprudent reliance on the unreformed, or Julian, calendar.

ERIC KEOWN



AT THE PICTURES

Down to the Sea in Ships—Flamingo Road—The Set-Up

THE appeal of *Down to the Sea in Ships* (Director: HENRY HATHAWAY) is very much more to the eye than to the ear. The director of photography was JOE MACDONALD, who was similarly responsible for much of the attractiveness of *Yellow Sky*; and the pictures he has been able to make with sailing-ships against the horizon and with sharply-angled shots up companionways, designed for contrast of velvet black linear shadow and gleaming light, are unexpected pleasures to discover in a simple, melodramatic, very sentimental story of an old whaling captain (New Bedford, 1887) and his little grandson which is altogether too overloaded with fake-philosophic dialogue of the kind best described, I insist, as *corny*. There are no women in the main story, which, therefore, energetically sets about providing a strong emotional situation with the jealousy of the old man for the young first mate because of the curly-haired infant's hero-worship. This and the heart-of-gold Gramps-to-grandson dialogue that goes with it are things I could very well do without. But some of it I would happily look at—look at—again, and some of the scenes of action at sea (the whale and the small boats, the holing of the ship by an iceberg and the dangerous efforts to repair it) are fiercely exciting.

Flamingo Road (Director: MICHAEL CURTIZ) opens with a gentle off-screen commentary suggesting that "there's a Flamingo Road in every town," and so forth—Flamingo Road being what is comprehensively called "the street

of social success." It is used as the title presumably just to symbolize the life's goal of the heroine, whom we first see as a sideshow dancing-girl in a cheap travelling fair; for it can hardly be offered as a statement of the subject of the picture, with



[Down to the Sea in Ships]

Man Practically Overboard
Dan Lunceford—RICHARD WIDMARK

the implication that this is how the typical Flamingo Road householder managed to get there. The film is, of course, a "vehicle" for JOAN CRAWFORD, who has, as usual, to suffer in expensive surroundings, but it is almost as plainly a "vehicle" for SYDNEY GREENSTREET. The whole



[Flamingo Road]

... The Whites of Their Eyes
Titus Semple—SYDNEY GREENSTREET;
Lane Bellamy—JOAN CRAWFORD

story revolves round the bitter enmity between the girl and the local sheriff. Before it brings him to the violent end we have been expecting, the melodrama manages to be quite entertaining. Here, too, the camera-work has unexpected interest: in circumstances as different as possible from those he photographed in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, TED McCORD finds at moments the same kind of almost stereoscopic clarity.

Better made than either of these, more intelligent and more valuable is *The Set-Up* (Director: ROBERT WISE). One can suspect its motives; setting out to show the grimy truth behind second-rate boxing and full of bitterly revealing portraits of the people connected with it, the film includes much that will appeal to exactly the sort of sadistically-minded spectator that it criticizes.

But this story of an ageing heavyweight who upset a "fixed" fight by winning is immensely well done, packed with first-rate detail in picture, sound and characterization, exciting and moving. The fight itself is brilliantly handled, in rapid shots of varying scale.

* * * * *

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Set-Up is about the best one showing in London, but if you want something lighter don't forget *Whisky Galore* (29/6/49) or, in spite of its heavy theatrical climax, *The Last Days of Dolwyn* (4/5/49).

That good Western *Yellow Sky* (15/6/49) and that bright comedy *A Letter to Three Wives* (25/5/49) are still in the suburbs. *The Great Gatsby* (18/5/49) is not a gangster story, as advertised, but an interesting character study. *Once a Jolly Swagman* (5/1/49) is an entertaining speedway picture.

RICHARD MALLETT

A WORD TO PARENTS

IT will be generally agreed by those in the age-group three to six years that bed-time is psychologically the most important time of the day. This, I feel, is not generally recognized by parents as a class, and by mine in particular.

But it should be pointed out that between the hours of six and seven-thirty P.M. most of the misunderstandings between parent and child arise. And especially is this so when the child is put to bed. Most children will agree that from the moment the nightlight is lighted, the milk is drunk, and the story told, a complete inability to comprehend the wishes of their child seems to cloud the minds of a mother and/or father, minds which otherwise during the day have been sufficiently amenable to reason, coercion, entreaty, and, if necessary, temper.

I find, myself, when I retire for the night, that I am subject to a carking doubt, for example, as to whether my parents, taking advantage of the prison-like couch in which I am incarcerated, are going to seize the opportunity to go out, leaving me to the doubtful mercies of a succession of ghosties, noises in the chimney, and wind blowing on the window.

Now it is admitted that parents must have a little time to themselves. Yet I must state that they pay too little attention to properly-spaced-out requests from the nursery. It is a fact that a drink of water is necessary to the contemplative comfort of a child half-an-hour after retiring; it is agreed that if curtains are drawn, they should be undrawn—or vice versa; and no child can help, say forty-five minutes after lights out, having a nose that requires urgent blowing. Very young children simply cry: that, for a while, is a fairly reliable method of bringing one's father. But it has little finesse, and has the vital defect—it is so easily overdone. I, personally, have had my nose blown, behind-the-wardrobe searched for a lion, a pain in my stomach, and "But I *was* sure I heard the front door, Daddy"—a good, carefully-thought-out hour's delaying tactics.



"You say your charges for sitting-in are ten shillings without Television and eight-and-six to seven-and-six with Television, depending on the programme?"

It will not have escaped notice that "Father" was mentioned above. It is usually agreed in the Park that fathers are more susceptible to the stiff upper lip, the eyes filled with tears not actually shed ("honestly, darling, I hadn't the heart to scold him, he was trying so hard not to howl!") than mothers.

Yet even fathers have their breaking point, and it's a wise child that knows his own father. It's not every child that can gauge to a nicety the timing of a last request to a father. And what is good for ten minutes' discussion on why, say, grass is green with one father, simply causes clenching of the hands and voice-raising with another. Most fathers can be led a certain way up the nursery garden path, but their reactions are inclined to be more violent when they do react.

The question of a *douceur*, or hushabye-money—for instance, "Now if my boy/girl will lie down like a little gentleman/lady to-night there will be a lovely new sixpence," etc.—has often been discussed where

prams and tricycles are gathered together. A school of opinion (both sexes from four to five years) maintains that bribes should be freely accepted, rather on the principle of *caveat emptor*; or that a small bag of well-mixed toffees is worth a problematical promise of a clockwork bus next day. The more experienced among us feel, however, that gratifying though the parental offering is, it does not remove the root cause—unless in very young females—of the gnawing doubt. Rather does it increase it, since a little quiet thumb-sucking will convince even the most ingenuous that there must be a reason for this offering in the first place.

We don't require anything actually in writing, we children, but there's no question that a little more give-and-take of views between the two parties concerned would ease what has become an embarrassment to us and a source of much unnecessary deception and recrimination to our parents.

APPLICATION

I BEG to apply for the post of Public Relations Officer to the Marylebone Cricket Club.

If appointed I would maintain the closest possible contact with the Press. In particular, I would make myself responsible for all official hand-outs, paying special attention to:

(a) *Cricketers' Epithets.* In the past the creation of such epithets has been far too haphazard, the onus having always remained on the individual journalist. As a result Hammond, after passing from the "promising" stage, spent no less than six seasons as "fluent," "superb" and "mighty" before finally settling down as "majestic." More recently Denis Compton took nearly as long to become "carefree," his intervening periods as "joyous" and "scintillating" having been almost universally regretted. To-day, too, we may sympathize with the difficult position of Evans, T. G., who is now indiscriminately described as "electric," "ebullient" and "effervescent." Clearly the time has come for some sort of standardization, and I suggest that this should be the direct responsibility of

the P.R.O. The award of a suitable epithet should be simultaneous with the presentation of a county cap; and the central control will enable duplication to be avoided.

(b) *The Season's Preliminaries.* During April Cricket Correspondents are everywhere occupied in suggesting ways and means by which the game may be improved and bankruptcy postponed. With the Committee's consent I would, therefore, issue at the end of each March an official list of possible amendments to the Laws, marked in order of preference. A new l.b.w. rule would of course always be included, and I might add such well-known and popular favourites as a smaller bat, a lighter ball, bigger stumps, time limits for batsmen, sixes to count twelve, the banning of left-handers, and so on. In addition there would be a special starred Feature of the Year, such as *Why Not Extra Runs to the Fielding Side for Hat Tricks?* In this way criticism could, by suggestion, be diverted towards the familiar and the future of the game protected.

(c) *Pessimism*. This, too, must be rigidly controlled. At the present

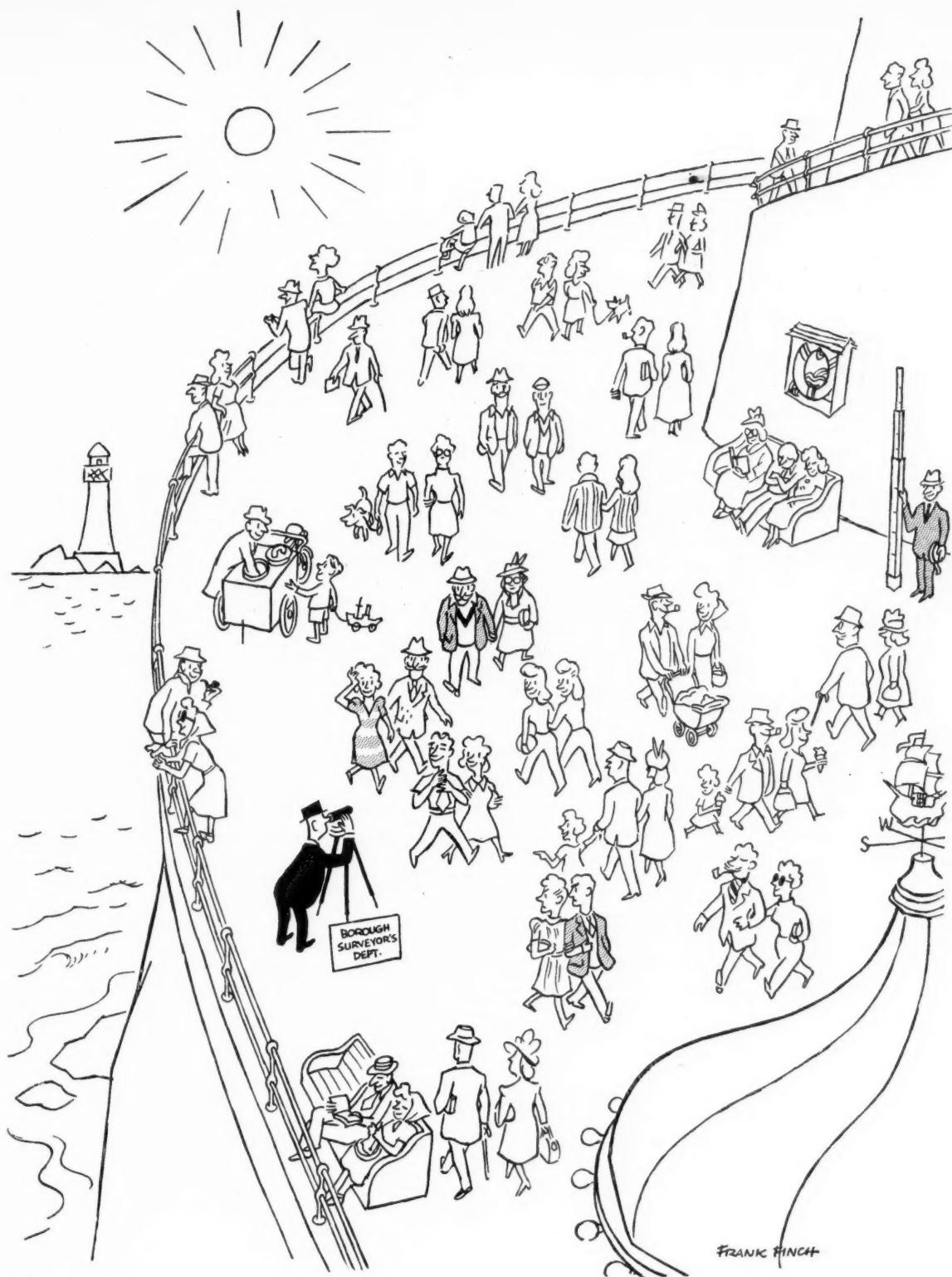
time certain correspondents are crying "Woe!" for twelve months in the year and thereby demoralizing everyone except, possibly, the players. In future, I would suggest, unlimited moaning should be allowed only during October, when the cricket world is fairly quiet. For the rest of the year I would restrict correspondents to an approved list of phrases, such as: (1) "Things were different in Grace's day"; (2) "There never was a batsman like Trumper (bowler like Barnes, wicket-keeper like Pooley, E., etc.)"; (3) "Swerve is the ruination of the modern game"; (4) "I wish grounds-men would go easy with the marl," and so on. Offenders who deviated from the list would be banned from all Press-boxes and official telephones for ever. On the other hand, a proper sense of proportion must be maintained, and I would, therefore, automatically award a similar punishment to all correspondents who wrote "After all, it's only a game," and in this case there would be no right of appeal.

(d) *Jokes.* Lists of these would be supplied and each joke withdrawn from circulation after fifteen years. This would put a time-limit to the following, among others: old gentlemen sleeping in pavilions; comic umpires festooned with hats; balls being bowled through beards; the tea-interval series; small boys collecting three autographs from one player in order to swap them for one of another player; and the one about "You've got him in two minds; he doesn't know whether to hit you for four or six." Correspondents guilty of repeating chestnuts after the time-limit had elapsed would suffer penalties as detailed in para. (c) above. In the case of authors, their books would be removed from the M.C.C.'s library and publicly burnt near the Grace Gates.

These few suggestions will give some idea of the type of duties I have in mind. If they be criticized on the ground that they are unduly totalitarian, I have no comment to make. I merely appeal to the M.C.C. to give my application the most serious consideration.



"Business has doubled ever since sweets came off the ration."





"A gentleman from one of them Public Opinion Polls called, ma'am, but he wouldn't leave his question."

THE REVOLUTIONARIES

O TREMBLE, all ye earthly Princes,
Bow down the crowned and
chrism'd nob;
Wise is the Potentate that winces
At the just clamour of the mob.

Shiver, ye Bishops, doff your mitres,
Huddle between your empty pews
Here comes a horde of left-wing writers
Brandishing salmon-pink reviews.

Comes the New Age. Your outworn faces
Vanish at our enlightened curse,
While we erect in your old places
Something considerably worse.

R. P. LISTER

HEREWARD RUNS AGROUND

WHERE," Theodore inquired at breakfast, "is Hereward?"

"He's gone out sailing," said Gloriana.

"Sailing! What in? Who with? When?"

"In the club cruiser. By himself. At six."

There was a hush at this, as well there might be. Imagine a man rising in the small hours, alone, in order to catch the morning tide for—presumably—pleasure! However, this particular eccentricity was regarded with a certain respect, for Hereward once wrote a book about sailing. It was a very small book containing a quantity of unreliable, and even misleading, information, but still it was a Book; Hereward had written it by himself, and it had been published. By this laborious expedient he had acquired a sort of spurious reputation as an authority on the sailing of boats. We therefore expressed sympathy for Gloriana and offered no further criticism. About noon we walked down to the harbour.

There, on the far side, was the "club cruiser," a cabined sloop of some four or five tons. There also was Hereward. Where he had intended to be by this time none could tell, but where he was was on the beach, flat on his back, his head on a cushion, fast asleep in the shadow of the boat. The latter looked out of her element, as indeed she was, being on her side and some yards from where the now narrow channel wound through the sand towards the distant sea. Such water as remained in the vicinity was glassy-smooth and the June sun beat down from a sky as blue as a sparrow's egg turned inside-out.

"Becalmed, by gad!" said Theodore.

We duly admired his choice of a word to describe a man who had managed to get himself left high and dry on the wrong side of a fairway buoy.

"And right in front of the club, too," said Alexandrina. "Poor Hereward!"

"Pop," said Auguste, "goes the bubble reputation in the channel's mouth."

This started some argument, Gloriana, as the castaway's wife, coming loyally to his support with the theory that it was the sort of thing that might happen to anyone. She even went so far as to say that the channel just there was notoriously treacherous and well known to change its course practically overnight. This defence was ruled out of order by the meeting, however, since the boat was stranded exactly abreast of the buoy in question while the buoy itself was seen unmistakably to be half in and half out of the water.

"Will he be hungry, do you think?" Alexandrina suggested. "Ought we to take him a hard-boiled egg or something?"

There was a noticeable lack of volunteers to approach Hereward at such a delicate moment, but luckily it proved unnecessary, as Gloriana disclosed that he had taken enough food to last him for the day. We therefore repaired to the club-house for a little refreshment on our own account and to hear the comments of the other members, which were not without interest. Comfortably seated on the balcony, we were able to watch Hereward as he awoke, stretched out a sail as an awning and settled down to his beer and sandwiches. This frugal repast concluded, he produced a typewriter and was seen to be at work.

"Catching up with his correspondence," said Gloriana admiringly.

"Writing a few amendments for his book, more likely," said Theodore.

I think myself that it was pure bravado. He must have sneaked ashore for the typewriter while we were still asleep.

An elderly member was heard to say that, having had the temerity to take out the club's only cruising boat and pile it up on the perishing putty, the least the feller could do was to get busy and scrape its bottom, dammit.

It was quite easy to calculate that Hereward had been in his humiliating position for some seven

and a half hours before we saw a small motor-boat put forth from the quay at the top of the harbour and head towards him. Sundry telescopes were trained on it.

"Gosh!" Theodore gasped. "It's the Admiral."

At once we were all united in sympathy for the unfortunate Hereward. The Admiral is a man who knows every teaspoonful of water in the harbour and has decided views and few inhibitions. Clearly Hereward was for it, and our hearts went out to him in sympathy. We watched the little boat, with the Admiral sitting aggressively in the stern, nose its way across the channel to near where Hereward sat, and tried to imagine the conversation—or, more likely, pithily phrased address. The boat did not stop. It turned and came straight back up the harbour.

Later, when it was considered safe to refer to the matter, we ventured to ask Hereward what the Admiral had said, what brief and thunderous epigram had been hurled, or perhaps grunted, across the burning sand.

"It was a nasty moment," he admitted. "Very nasty indeed. I confess that for a moment I thought of abandoning ship and taking flight. However, when these crises come one faces them somehow. Training, I suppose, discipline—some ingrained sense instilled by years of—"

"Very likely," said Theodore. "But what exactly did the Admiral say?"

"He said, actually, 'I've got a copy of that book of yours in my store up there. You say that a mast tilted at an angle of forty-five degrees is the signal for *"Do not come near me: insufficient depth of water."* I thought it might interest you to know that I have measured the angle of your mast with a clinometer and find it to be exactly forty-five degrees'."

"Was that all?"

"That was all. He then turned sixteen points and steamed all the way back again."

So Hereward's reputation as a nautical authority remains disappointingly untarnished after all.



William Scully



I

CONSIDER, first, the flowers that come
When earth's hard crust lies sleeping numb
In snow's secure pavilion.
The first faint fanfares of the sun
Arouse them with a clarion call:
He is their Prince, their General.
At once the Underground's astir:
Each hidden seed-chronometer
Is synchronized; each close-furled leaf
Receives a strict but silent brief,
And every embryonic flower
Grows tense against the zero-hour.

These are the first, the lonely fighters,
The partisans, the dynamiters.
They use light arms—grenades and knives.
By stealth each violet survives;
The crocus thrusts with bodkin skill;
Sharp daggers arm the daffodil;
Each frail anemone and scilla
Is an adroit and trained guerrilla.
No reinforcements, no barrage:
With naught but nerve and camouflage
They pierce, as picked commandos should,
Through the vast jungle of the wood.
Their build is flexible and slender:
They bend, but break not, nor surrender.
When green stiletos trim the larch,
Consider, then, the flowers of March.

II

Consider, next, the stalwart second-comer:
The heavy troops, Grand Army of the Summer.
Those golden trumpets of their Prince, the Sun,
Are louder, nearer now: with horse and gun,
With banners fluttering, with fife and drum,
On well-shod feet the big battalions come.
Their arms are unconcealed, their scutcheons bright
Gules, azure, argent—red and blue and white
Of poppy, cornflower, marguerite: gold-laced
With mcliot, to suit the General's taste.
These troops can sleep by night and march by day
Girls blow them kisses all along the way;
And though their packs are heavy, they can die
On meat and bread, and drink a flask of wine,
And pick up souvenirs in friendly pillage,
And sing, and shout, and billet in the village.

They fight with weapons clean and orthodox;
They face their dangers and they take their knocks
But, if they fall, theirs is at least to sip
The pain-relieving drug of comradeship.
These are the conquerors: the hard-
fought field
Is theirs at last; the weary foe
must yield.
They have dug deep the footholds
which were made
By that first snowdrop in the wood-
land glade,
Who lived on pocket rations, and who
died
In loneliness, in silence and in pride.
Victory's won. The year is at the
noon.

Consider the triumphant flowers of
June.

GREEN WARFARE

III

Consider—and remember—the flowers of September,
The tried Administrators, the sound Consolidators:
Experienced and wise, they plan, they organize.
These are the sapient ones: with neither spears nor
guns,
But with plain common sense, with court and conference,
With firm judicial hand they occupy the land
Bought with the precious coin of young men's lung and
loin.
For uniforms they choose the rich imperial hues
Of sunset: crimson, flame, bronze, purple . . . Every
name
Is ponderous and strong—Tall Ironweed, Live-long,
Burdock and Bergamot. They're an impressive lot,
Thick-gloved and glossy-booted, coarse-veined and heavy-
fruited.

There comes a peaceful lull. Maybe their wits grow
dull

A little, from the weight of their supreme estate;
Maybe their cumbrous robes turn them to xenophobes;
Maybe a hair's-breadth chance parts pride from arrogance;
Maybe great power's a draught too heady to be
quaffed

By any save the gods. Maybe—but what's the odds?
There's no one who can tell why, one day, all's not
well;

One day, a strange unrest troubles the victors' breast;
A chill wind shakes their laurels; conciliums turn to
quarrels;

Long rains and sullen skies damp their high enterprise:
Then, like a sudden flail, strikes the relentless gale.

What's left of all their talk? Stripped leaf and hollow
stalk . . .

Gone now is the year's garden, and earth's deep crust
must harden

Beneath the tyrant Frost. The long campaign is
lost.

Consider, most of all, the flowers of the Fall.

Yet still there's hope. The cycle still must turn.

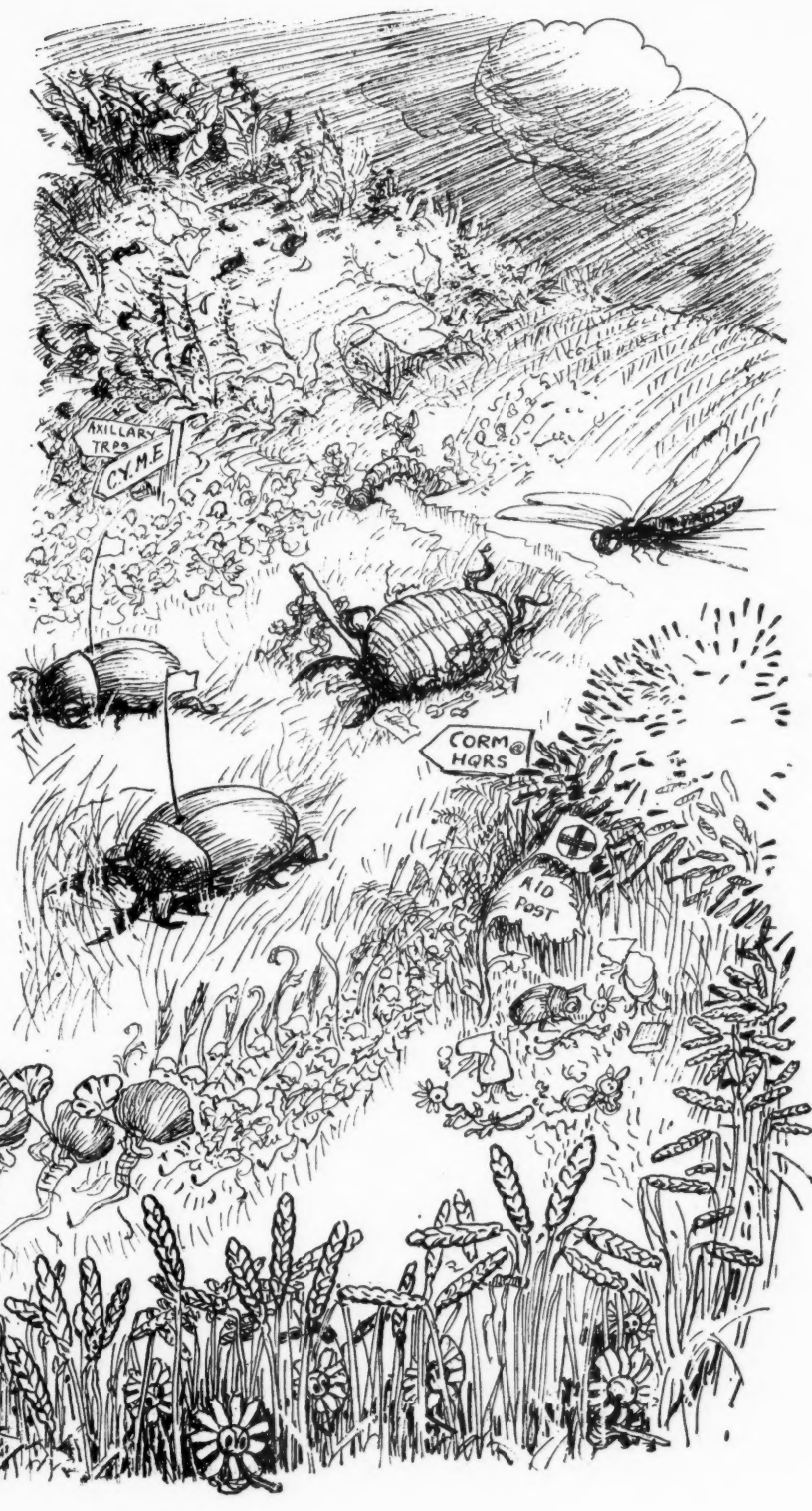
Deep in earth's core the quenchless fires burn.

The Sun, their Prince, is wounded but unslain;

His trumpet, muted now, will sound again.

Fresh plans are laid. Works on, without a sound

The small unconquerable Underground. JAN





PICTURE GALLERIES

THE picture galleries of London—how close-packed, and how far-flung, they stand! Take a piece of the West End with Bond Street down the middle, give it a hundred yards or so to the left and right and you have a rare Tom Tiddler's Ground, a huddle of private treasure-houses; but, though you may have included the Royal Academy of Arts, and be nearly within sight of the Wallace Collection across Oxford Street, you will be nowhere near the National Gallery; when you reach it you will be next door to the National Portrait Gallery, but a long, long way from the Tate and the Victoria and Albert Museum; and, in Kensington, ten leagues beyond the world's end from the current col-

lection in Whitechapel, or the Anglo-French Art Centre in St. John's Wood that you have been told not to miss.

I am speaking, of course, as the foot-slogger would feel. But nobody sensible "does" London's picture galleries all at once, or even in twos or threes. They abound, but they exist singly, each a separate port for the conscious pilgrim, the student, the office luncher

who does not live by sandwiches alone. Who is not aware of this country's new devotion to art? A by-product of war, they say; and still on the up grade. Looking at pictures rarely costs more than a shilling or two, very often nothing at all, and the present slump in pocket-money is not affecting this enthusiasm.

Complacently we may look back a little more than a hundred years. In spite of Constable's warning in 1822 that "should there be a National Gallery (which is talked of) there will be an end of the art in poor old England," two years later the worst had happened and by 1838 the Trafalgar Square building was open. It is a bit of a surprise to us post-war art-lovers to learn that 1841 netted over half a million visitors. But complacency returns; Sir Charles Holmes and Mr. Collins Baker, the Gallery's historians, record that in the early days an unproofed population found it a good place in the rain. Nice people said hard things about the "idle and unwashed" who filled it. Apparently the surrounding dirt—Trafalgar Square was on the fringe





of squalor—and the first Keeper's well-intentioned habit of mixing oil with varnish on the pictures in his care were together responsible for the gathering toffee-colour of so many canvases. The cleaning of Old Masters has been a controversy since the eighteen-forties, but in the last few years the National Gallery's pictures have given their trustees another worry. They insist now on air-conditioning. They had it in the war when they were evacuated to Wales and won't do without it. The machinery has been installed, and already the worst cases luxuriate in regulated humidity.

Public picture galleries are a fairly new invention in Britain. The Royal Academy was fittingly a pioneer; 1768, first President the great Reynolds, first exhibition in a Pall Mall auction room, first office in Old Somerset House. The R.A. pioneered, too, with its art school; one of its treasures is the record of Reynolds' prize-giving speeches, occasions comparable in their own sphere with a Donne sermon. This must be one of the richest galleries in historical perquisites; besides the palettes, the sitters' chairs and other relics of past masters, it has in its Diploma Galleries at least one picture from every Royal Academician ever elected. Add the regular School competitions which occupy the building between the summer and winter exhibitions and you have what I may call the sober and permanent side of Burlington House.

It was in the Tate Gallery that the more or less standardized architecture of these august places first impressed me; I have since noticed generally the way they put you back in time, and I think it is the light from the roof which

ting down to that piece of Millbank (the gallant bus pulls up with an almost country air) does not keep the people away. Nearly a million a year, and an average of a thousand on a routine day in the winter; this is a credit to the general interest in British art and the moderns as well as to Dr. John Rothenstein's direction. One may perhaps mention without anticlimax a restaurant which is a very pleasant example of a sensible development in the art world.

And now what about those private galleries, that concentrated, specialized world of connoisseurs? It is, I think, the connoisseurship that should be first emphasized. A privately-owned gallery may be purely a salesroom where the goods are Old Masters; though that does not mean that the office lunchers or the students will not be seen meditating beside the Forsytes, who are perhaps thinking of their estates and the kindly Act by which Genuine Art is exempt from death duties. The luncher might simply be thinking that it is clever to paint like that, that the atmosphere unifies. Great pictures are great levellers, levelling up, not down. And in the galleries where it is possible for the modern artist to command space by payment the same sheer weight of backstage knowledge makes itself felt, so that it is still the quality of the pictures, not the wealth of the artist, that is the controlling factor.

makes the scene something out of the "Microcosm of London." That is an anachronism, but I cannot better describe the pale, clean colouring. One of the surprising things about the Tate is that the difficulty of get-

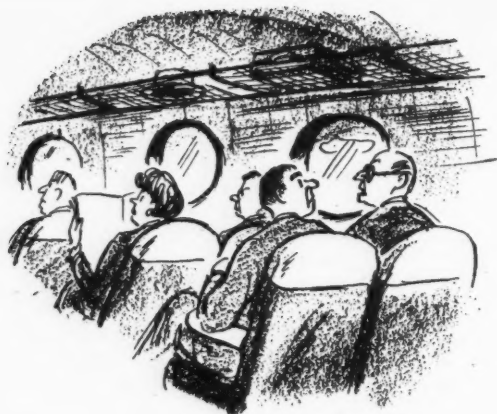


However, let us assume that you paint very powerfully and have made the grade with a leading gallery. You can hire the biggest room for three weeks for a hundred guineas, when you will pay your landlord fifteen per cent. commission on sales; or you can do it with all commission and no rent, if you line the patrons up to buy a fixed number. There are the invitation cards, there is the insurance, there are the prescribed rings to be fitted to the backs of the frames. The whole process is a series of dull blows aimed against the fallacy that artists are dreamy, don't-care chaps. It would be interesting to get a composite character-study from such a connoisseur as Mr. Cecil Phillips, who helped to found the Leicester Galleries nearly fifty years ago, has dealt with a galaxy of the famous, and with his partners spends every minute away from his exhibitions in assessing, inviting (this gallery, like so many others, is unrentable), planning two years ahead. Art galleries are significantly often run by families; it is a business to be started young and lived fanatically.

Meanwhile, on the other side, so to speak, of the picture, the public flows into the galleries, the show-rooms, the exhibitions, the homes of London's temporary and permanent treasures, of the established and the hopeful, the odd, the afflicting and, in such wonderful richness, the unquestionably sublime. The crowds come to gaze, to buy, to support their friends with a perhaps rather self-important goodwill, or still (I suspect) sometimes to get out of the rain; but when once they are there they will look, and feel, awfully alike; they are all people doing something above the level of ordinary living, a massed tribute to the importance and permanence of the immaterial.

ANDE





Howard

"According to my fountain-pen we're at just over seven thousand feet."

MURDER IN THE MAKING

"I NEARLY became a murderer myself," said Cox, while we were discussing a recent murder trial.

"Ha, ha," I said. "I remember once when I—"

"I was at school at the time," continued Cox. "It was during a clay-modelling lesson. I hated clay-modelling. I hated all lessons in which I was expected to do anything or make things. I liked sitting in my desk and watching my teachers wear themselves out. Clay-modelling I hated in particular."

"But how did you nearly murder somebody during a clay-modelling lesson?"

"The mere feel of the clay made my nerve-endings vibrate, and my more remote neurons used to jangle in sympathy."

"Who was the victim?"

"I remember each pupil was forcibly supplied with a grey tray, a large slab of grey clay, and a small puddle of grey water."

"Was it one of the boys or the master?"

"It makes me feel bilious to talk about it."

"About the murder?"

"I had up to then managed to fob the art master off by fashioning various objects like tennis-balls and

pancakes. He was not keen on my tennis-balls and pancakes; but he soon grasped the idea that I was not good at clay-modelling, and he was not usually an unkind man."

"Then why did you try to kill him?"

"Once, after my father had explained some modern sculpture to me, I made an irregular shape and bored a large hole through it. The art master asked me what it was, but I could see that he was incredulous even before I had told him. I explained that it was an idea rather than an object. He said would I please stick to objects rather than ideas for the time being."

"Was that when you tried to—"

"One day I was seized with a wild ambition; I wanted to create a vase or urn. But I found it difficult to secure any graceful lines. After about ten minutes it was more or less the same width all the way up, so I seized it in the middle and squeezed it until it squirted out at both ends, producing a vase that looked like an hour-glass. But it was not symmetrical and all my efforts could not make it so. I kept on scraping little shavings off the bulges until it was again practically the same width all the way up.

Soon all the little pieces that I had whittled off had dried out and were quite intractable. Suddenly the vase itself collapsed into fragments. The puddle of grey water was now used up, and I was faced with a tray full of friable and frangible clay crumbs. I abandoned my Utopian vase. If only I could make a solid lump, all I wanted to do was to squash it flat into a pancake or roll it round and round into a tennis-ball. I scrabbled, kneaded, and massaged. Every now and then there was a catch in my voice even though I wasn't talking. I now saw that even a rudimentary pancake was out of the question."

"You tried to steal a model from the boy in the next desk," I exclaimed.

"I was leaning forward to retrieve a small piece of clay which had jumped over the edge of the tray when my attention was diverted from my crumbs to my teacher. There was a little table which the open door of the big cupboard hid from the rest of the classroom. I, however, was at the end of the front row, and in leaning forward I had a fairly good view. His extraordinary behaviour held me spellbound. After cutting up new pencils issued by the education authority into small lengths, he put these pieces into his mouth and began gnawing at them in a curious, tentative way."

"You acted in self-defence," I cried. "They took him away struggling violently."

"At first I was puzzled by his behaviour, but the true explanation quickly occurred to me. Earlier in the week he had been considerably worried about our losing a large number of pencils. For every used pencil, he said, he had to produce a stump. Now he was busy creating stumps that looked as if they had been used; and by the way he exposed his eye-teeth as he munched, I could see that they were poor quality pencils."

"Something caused him to turn his head, and for a few awful moments we gazed at each other—he with three or four pencil stumps hanging out of his mouth, and I mechanically rolling a clay crumb between my forefinger and thumb.

I sank back, but he knew that I had seen all. A minute later, he emerged from behind the cupboard door, trying to look nonchalant."

Satisfied that I had located the victim and that the climax was at hand, I remained silent.

"He pretended that I was not his real objective and glanced at the work of other boys in a desultory way, pausing to praise a boy who was just putting the finishing touches to a model of the Taj Mahal. As he approached my desk I watched him carefully.

"For a few seconds he stood gazing at me like a recently converted cannibal. When he spoke, he spoke far too quietly, asking me what my tray of crumbs represented. I thought of trying to avert the storm by saying that it was a snow-fall or a collection of very small tennis-balls, but I felt that my words would carry little weight. Suddenly he began screeching at me. He asked me if I had spent the whole afternoon putting my clay through a sieve. He told me that if I was tired of making tennis-balls that looked like lemons, I should make a lemon that looked like a tennis-ball. By now he had wound himself up so far that I thought he was going to fly to pieces. Becoming inarticulate, he rushed to the cupboard, produced a cane, and told me to bend over."

"Yes, yes!" I cried in excitement.

"I bent over, and he gave me four terrible cuts. I tottered back to my seat with rage in my heart, for I knew that I had been caned, not because I had failed to produce a clay model, but because he had been eating pencils."

"What about the murder?" I said coldly.

"Oh, I never tried to commit an actual murder," said Cox.

"Then why did you say that you nearly became a murderer?"

"Well, if I had been a weaker character, the injustice of it all would have warped my mind and slowly turned me into a particularly vicious type of murderer."

If Cox has a fault—and he has many—it is that he is too fond of talking about himself.

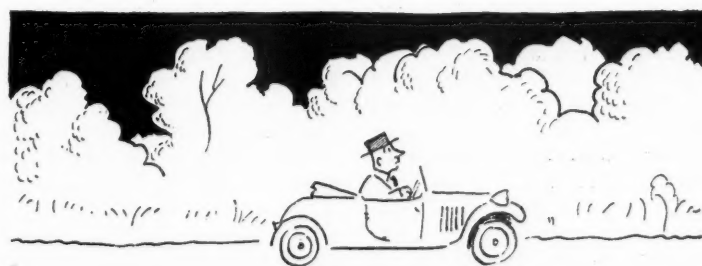
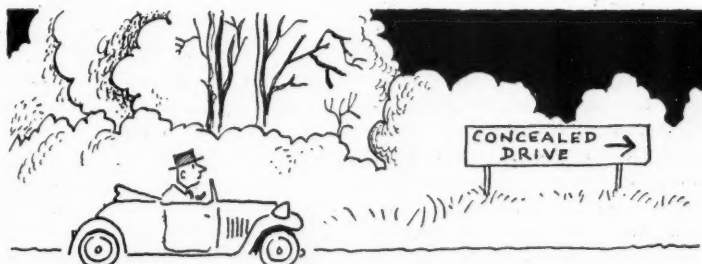
AT A CLUB NET

PEACE, ancient, peace! or, if you must impart
These rusty precepts on the batsman's art,
Take them to children, try them on the dog;
Find some more docile victim to instruct,
Or tell your grandam how an egg is sucked:
Teach not a pedagogue.

Presumptuous sage! The man you now address
Is one whom many a champion will confess
The earliest tutor of his infant bat;
And this device you call on me to use—
Men have led counties, men have won their blues
Because I showed them that.

When you shall learn that childhood's second stage
Has sapped my nerves, come *then* to school my age,
Then press your wisdom on my feebler brain.
Meantime be silent, teach me not anew
What all these years I have essayed to do,
And all these years in vain.

M. H. LONGSON



Monday, July 4th

LIKE an audience at a variety show who know that the star turn is due on about the middle of the performance, the Third and Fourth Estates of the Realm looked on the proceedings of the House of Commons to-day and Tuesday with a mixture of impatience and good-natured tolerance. Although, by all accounts, there will be precious little about which to raise a cheer on Wednesday, the statement to be made then by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (so the House hoped) would at least end a period of uncertainty and let the country "know where it stood" on the worrying question of the dollar.

So there was a slightly artificial air about the proceedings to-day. Members hurried in when they saw the tall, spare figure of the Chancellor arrive.

But it was a false alarm. Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS had only a long, highly-technical statement to read on the subject of his talks (last week) with European Finance Ministers concerning intra-European payments under the Marshall Plan. This he read at about three hundred words a minute, without so much as a pause after such phrases as "the multilateralization of convertibility." It appeared that something had been arranged at the Paris talks which would avert a further drain on our dollars—and the House cheered.

Then Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, the Minister of Labour, mentioned another "countervailing," and far less satisfactory, event—the continued strike in the London docks over some dispute in Canada. The Minister said that many thousands were still on strike. Mr. PLATTS-MILLS, an Independent Labour Member, argued that it was not a strike but a lock-out—"a real, old-fashioned bosses' lock-out."

This description of a situation in a nationalized industry so shocked the Labour Members that they registered disapproval—and fairly went up in flames when Mr. PLATTS-MILLS described a fellow-Labour M.P. as a "special agent"—because

IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

he had given to the Home Secretary evidence of Communist activity in the dock strikes.

Rebuked by the Speaker, Mr. PLATTS-MILLS withdrew the description; but then Mr. PIRATIN, Communist, inquired whether it was the policy of the Minister to use Labour M.P.s as "stool-pigeons."

A roar of protest rose, and Mr. MELLISH, a few seats along the bench, leaped to his feet with an angry invitation to Mr. PIRATIN to "come outside and say that." A few



Impressions of Parliamentarians

89. Capt. Swingler (Stafford)

K.C.s and others calmed the angry Mr. MELLISH, and the Speaker intervened again with a command that the "offensive" phrase be withdrawn. Mr. PIRATIN obeyed, but explained that he had not mentioned any specific Member.

Mr. MELLISH did not appear greatly appeased. However, a little anger more or less was not likely to be noticed, since the ensuing debate—on housing—was in the charge of Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN, Minister of Health. Mr. WALTER ELLIOT (who, to choose a simile "in character," acts as a blow-lamp to Mr. BEVAN's highly-explosive gas-main) was leading on the Opposition side, and, in no time at all, a row that would have done no discredit to Billingsgate in the good old days was in

progress. Of course, the things that were said were different from those of the fish-market, but the "nasty way they were said" was the same—which was all that mattered.

The argument was on familiar lines: The Opposition said there were not enough houses and hinted—nay, more, asserted—that, had they been in office, there would have been many more. They added that, if only Mr. B. had lived up to election promises, there would have been more, even with the *present* Government in office.

In face of Mr. ISAACS' stern condemnation of unofficial strikes, it was strange to find one of his leading Cabinet colleagues indulging in a "stay-out" strike himself. But Mr. BEVAN (having replied to Mr. ELLIOT in an indignant storm of words, the burden of which was that all shortcomings—if any—in housebuilding were due to Tory misrule and years of neglect under other Governments) promptly disappeared. Opposition speeches went on, and when the time came to wind up there were cries for the Minister's presence—with demands for his resignation as an alternative.

Eventually, with half an hour of the debate to go, Mr. BEVAN strolled in nonchalantly and, amid a tornado of angry protest, said he had gone out as a private demonstration of his own because his Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. BLENKINSOP, had been "insulted" some days ago by the Opposition.

It was all very silly and signs-of-the-timesish.

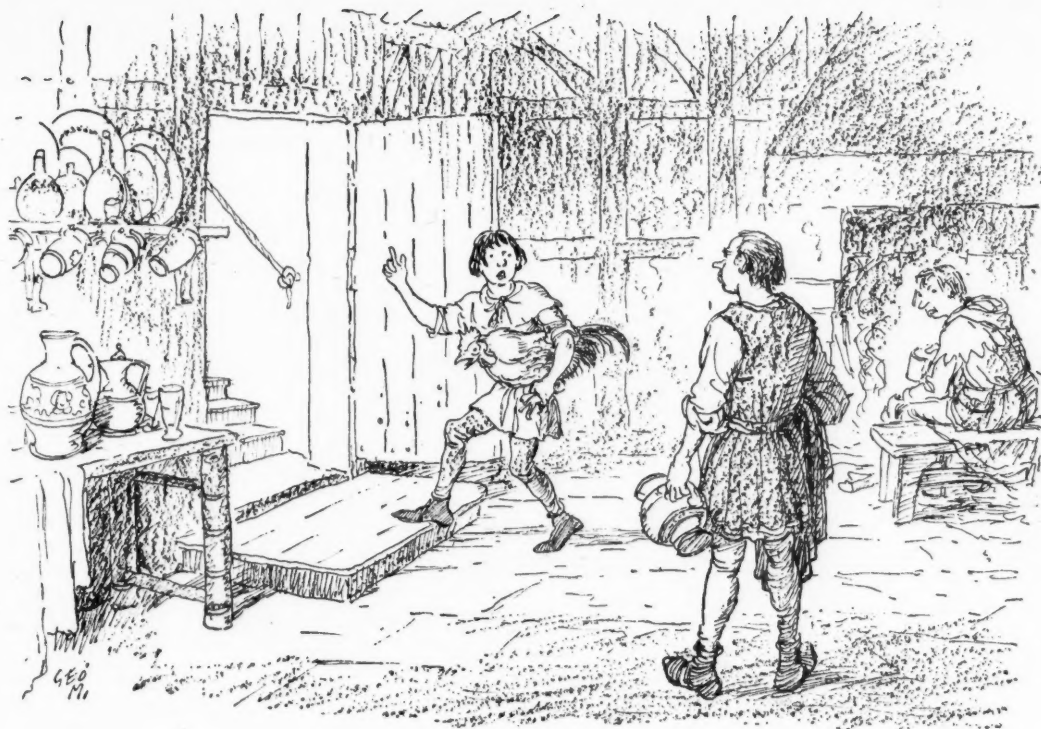
Their Lordships finished off the Committee stage of the Iron and Steel Bill without any additional carnage, and not even a resignation from the Labour Party was announced.

Tuesday, July 5th

Something (as the estate agents say) "quite unique" occurred this

House of Lords:	afternoon. At the
Ladies' Day	end of Questions,
House of Commons:	Mr. BUCHAN-
Something Unusual	HEPBURN, the
	Opposition Chief

Whip, whose office deprives the House of a first-class speaker, asked leave to make a personal statement.



"Gentleman in number five wants an early call."

This was to the effect that he had had no warning from Mr. BEVAN of his overnight stay-out strike, as the Minister had claimed.

Mr. BEVAN rose in most unwontedly chastened mood and replied that the Government Chief Whip had failed to convey his views to the Opposition Chief Whip and therefore he was in error—and therefore (here there was an audible gasp from both sides of the House) he expressed regret.

The day's debate was on education, and was largely of a technical nature, with teachers taking a leading part. All through the discussion there was a cautious tone and many mentions of a possible economy drive—after to-morrow.

Before the debate, Major JAMES MILNER, Chairman of Ways and Means, asked for and obtained the withdrawal of the personal Bill promoted by the Countess of Mountbatten to give her greater freedom in the handling of her estate. A little later, Lord JOWITT, the Lord

Chancellor, in the Lords, moved the Second Reading of a Government Bill to give *all* married women the freedom sought by the Countess. This was agreed to.

Wednesday, July 6th

So many Peers crowded into the House of Commons this afternoon that it seemed like a joint meeting of the two Houses. And when Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS rose to make his statement on the drain on gold and dollars, he was heard in almost complete silence.

It was a brief story. In the last three months, our gold and dollar reserves (the "last ditch" protection) had fallen from £471 millions to £406 millions. Therefore, everything possible had to be done (a) to save, and (b) to earn, dollars. How? By not increasing personal incomes, cutting export prices, economizing, and more doing-without—and, of course, by avoiding the "ridiculous

luxury" of politically-inspired strikes. Import cuts? Yes, but more about those later in the year.

There it was. The story was partly out—a sort of tantalizing "trailer" to the drama to come. Mr. ANTHONY EDEN was quickly up with a demand for a debate and a reminder that (*in re* economy) the Government was the greatest spender of them all. He grew hot when Mr. MORRISON spoke of the "shortness of Parliamentary time" and pressed his demand for more than one day's debate on so vital a topic.

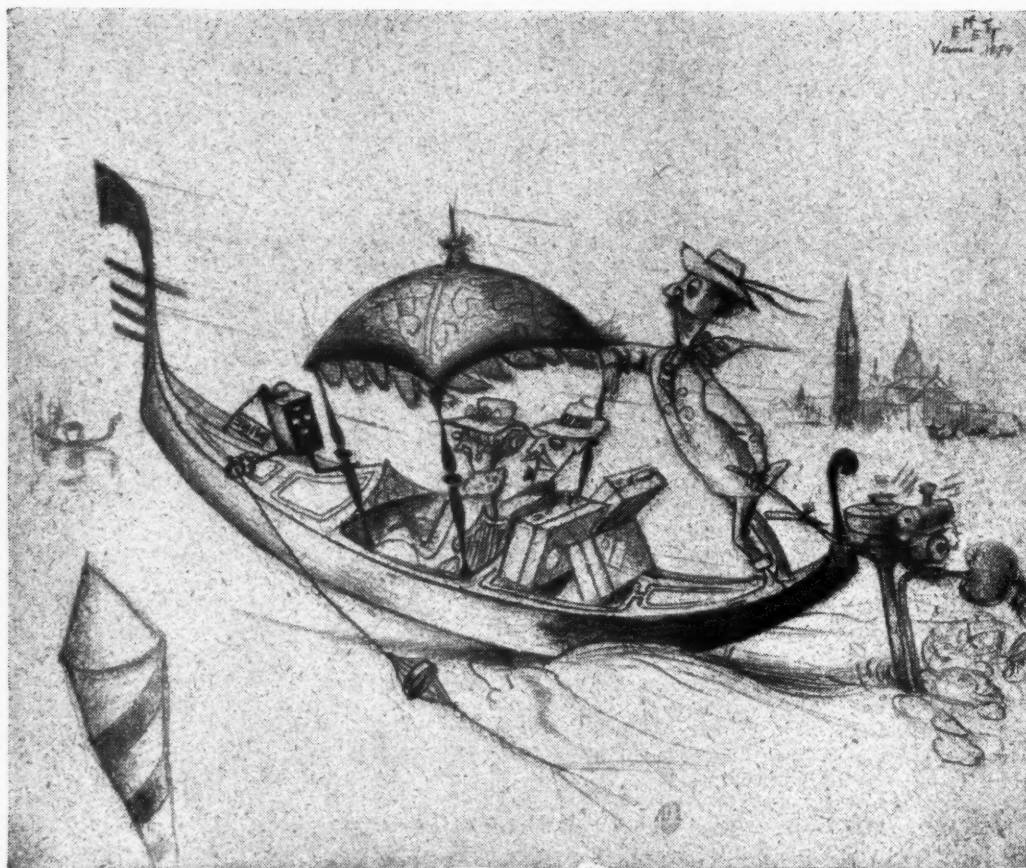
Thursday, July 7th

Mr. ISAACS, on misinformation received, announced a strike of meat market men, and later apologized for the mistake.

Mr. PLATTSMILLS again clashed with the Speaker, on the question of a motion about the docks trouble, and the Speaker ended the argument with a sharp warning about "impertinence."

House of Commons:
Grave News About
Dollars

House of Commons:
Two Members
in Trouble



"Can you REALLY believe it? Here we are, actually drifting down the Grand Canal in a gondola, like the Doges of old!"

SELLING SPACE

I MET a man in town to-day,
Who said, "I'm selling space."
He looked at me with a crinkled eye
And sunlight in his face.
He sold it by the cubic foot
In boxes neatly tied
With coloured ribbons, knotted tight,
And seals on either side.

He'd scented space from gardens,
Loud with the hum of bees,
And silent space from churches
And dim cool libraries.
He'd white space from a snowstorm
And black space, dug from mines,
And sea-blue space from the ocean's face
Among his favourite lines.

He'd singing space from tree-tops
With note of thrush and tit,
And space alive with tiny wings
That whirr and fly and flit.
He'd cosmic space, deep purple,
Night-gathered from the sky,
Brought back in jars with whirling stars
And startled lesser fry.

He said, "This trade was simple,
When Euclid had the say,
But now with space all crumple
And crease and curve and ray
I think it's absolutely plain
My method's out of date;
I must buy some bags of Cellophane
And sell the stuff by weight."

AT THE PLAY

The Young and Fair (St. MARTIN'S)—*This Walking Shadow* (PLAYHOUSE)

THE *Young and Fair* is a well-written, smoothly-produced play which might have been interesting if it had not frittered itself away in childish heroics. It is about a snob American college for girls of, I should guess, about seventeen, who behave as if they were twelve and whose two-year course, of rather vague cultural value, is sharply divided between receiving calculated hell from the seniors during their first year and giving it to the juniors in their second. The headmistress is a tired woman living for the college, which she has built up from scratch; having run into low water she has been obliged to borrow and is now the slave of the intolerant trustees who seem, if Mr. Thurber's evidence in *The Male Animal* is to be added to this, a feature of American education.

The point has arrived when this once scrupulous woman will stick at no kind of mental dishonesty to keep her job. I find her character baffling, and I believe a woman of her supposed integrity would have cleared out long before.

There are three problem-girls in the college—a bully (daughter of No. 1 Trustee), a neurotic kleptomaniac and a Jewess who has only made the grade by pretending to be a gentile. Falling back on a ruse dear to all writers of school fiction, Mr. RICHARD NASH makes the bully use the kleptomaniac's thefts to involve the Jewess and to frame the sister of a new assistant doing her best to clean things up. These three hard cases are drawn vividly enough along conventional lines, but whenever the author appears to be about to treat them more seriously and not merely as cogs in an absurd plot his play swings back to the adolescent pother of

the Fifth Form at St. Elswitha's. Not even Miss MARIE NEY can quite resolve the dithering Head, though she tries gallantly. Miss JANE BAXTER is very much the upright young mistress of the story-books, and of the all-female cast Miss JOAN NEWELL, Miss TILSA PAGE, Miss SHEILA SHAND GIBBS

have been more forceful is *This Walking Shadow*, a drab picture of life in a small Scots town, by Mr. BENEDICK SCOTT. This falls between lusty melodrama and a psychological study of the effects of poverty on youth, neither quite getting its head. The plot is needlessly tangled, and too much of the time that might

have been spent in deeper examination of the principal characters is devoted to atmospherics, to an amorous policeman, an arthritic lamplighter whose lamps have the curious trick of going on before he reaches them, and a recurrent chorus of gin-soaked hags. None the less, parts of the play are powerful, and shorn of some of its loose ends the piece could be much improved. Miss FRED A JACKSON takes the part of the bad girl with a golden heart who gets into trouble

with a married man (a major loose end, fading out with a completeness he could hardly have expected) and tries to father her unborn child on a virtuous, or fairly virtuous, lad from Glasgow; she has several big opportunities to let rip her particular storms. Mr. RODDY McMILLAN plays the shy, friendly visitor extremely well, and as a fiercely revengeful pervert Mr. JACK STEWART adds a sinister note of villainy. ERIC KEOWN

Recommended

DAPHNE LAUREOLA—*Wyndham's*—Bridie and Edith Evans both at their best.

THE HEIRESS—*Haymarket*—From Henry James's story, very well staged.

BLACK CHIFFON—*Westminster*—Flora Robson superb in good family drama.

FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS—*Vaudeville*—Rattigan's first comedy, still funny.

HARVEY—*Prince of Wales*—Sid Field and the rabbit.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS AND TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA—*Open Air, Regent's Park*—a pleasant evening out-of-doors, but only until July 16.

[*The Young and Fair*

A School for Scandal

Frances Morritt—Miss JANE BAXTER; Sara Cantry—Miss MARIE NEY; Patty Morritt—Miss SHEILA SHAND GIBBS; Lee Baron—Miss JOAN NEWELL; Drucilla Eldridge—Miss PAMELA ALAN

and Miss PAMELA ALAN stand out. The latter, playing the bully, is so good that she makes us wonder greatly what the parents of the Brook Valley Academy are about.

Another piece that might easily

[*This Walking Shadow*

The Road to Ruin

Kate McShane—Miss FRED A JACKSON

AT THE BALLET

MARQUIS DE CUEVAS' *Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo*
(COVENT GARDEN)

THE MARQUIS DE CUEVAS and his *Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo* are paying their second visit to London. Their repertoire has undergone a rigorous spring-cleaning since last year, about half of it having rightly been consigned to limbo. For some of this year's crop of novelties, too, the garbage-can obviously yawns, but *Mad Tristan*, much though one may dislike the psychoanalyst and all his works, cannot be dismissed so easily. It is a Freud's-eye view of *Tristan and Isolde* composed and designed by SALVADOR DALI—a horrible subject, danced to a truly vile hotch-potch of WAGNER; but for sustained imaginative power it is quite on a level with HELPMANN'S *Hamlet*. DALI's surrealist designs

are brilliantly effective, and MASSINE'S choreography is of unfailing invention and beauty of design even if his genius for characterization is afforded no scope. *Tristan and Isolde* (ANDRÉ EGLEVSKY and ANNA CHESELKA) are abstractions existing in a nightmare of animated dishmops and bunches of flowers, trees with female heads and reptilian creatures trundling wheelbarrows. Huge horses' heads suspended in mid-air draw aside to reveal a swaddled corpse being lowered into a tomb while bloodshot eyes with lashes of sprouting leaves look on from the wings; and, to complete the spine-chilling catalogue, we are told that *Tristan* is finally eaten by *Isolde*—an interpretation of the Liebestod that would have astonished WAGNER. Yet this horrible fantasy has moments of sheer brilliance, such as the dance of the red-robed Death to WAGNER'S famous cor anglais solo. This has an uncanny logic that will remain in the memory long after the rest is (perhaps mercifully) forgotten.

MASSINE has also revived for this company two of his most suc-



cessful ballets, *Le Beau Danube*, with the original décor after CONSTANTIN GUYS, and *The Good-Humoured Ladies*, with rather disappointing designs by DERAÏN. MASSINE dances with undiminished verve, and these revivals are most enjoyable, though a little lacking in finish. *Swan Lake* is poor, but *Les Sylphides* with ROSELLA HIGHTOWER and TATIANA RIABOUCHINSKA shows a great improvement on last year. There is an entirely charming revival of the classic *La Fille mal Gardée* and an excellent one of JOHN TARAS' *Designs With Strings*. Altogether the feet of this company seem set on the road to achievement, and we shall watch their future with interest.

D. C. B.

THE LAWN

MY garden has a lawn—
Green and withdrawn,
Shaded by trees
Wherein the breeze
And—need I add?—the bees
Make soothing melodies . . .

And on a day
It may
Be fall,
When I have pulled up all
The various kinds of weed
That seed,
Blithe and unbidden—
The groundsel, fat hen, chickweed, ragwort,
milk thistle, nettles (dead and otherwise)
and the rest—
And hurled them on the midden,
And dealt with every conceivable brand of
garden pest—
The ant, the leatherjacket, the palmer, the earwig
(which I am told is an excellent mother)

As well as the aphides which smother
The rose trees—
And, after coping with all these,
Tackled the wasps that generally get to the
ripe pears first,
And shoed away the blackbird that regularly
comes
And eats plums
Till he is ready to burst . . .
When that day,
As I say,
Shall dawn,
I shall lay down the shovel and the hoe
(Like Poor Old Joe),
Not to mention the trowel and shears
And the secateurs,
And go
And fetch a garden-chair
On to the lawn
And there
I'll sit
On it. . . .

C. FOX SMITH

BOOKING OFFICE

Two Aesthetes

OSCAR WILDE always managed to make Art sound vague and remote but worth the devotion of Philistines with yearnings. Many of the happy low-brows he converted into harassed middle-brows must have looked wistfully back to the days before echoing the Master became a factor in Social Success. The practising artists, who turned their backs in disgust, were of course not an audience Wilde worried about attracting; they had little fashionable prestige and they saw through him. Only Whistler, who was half a disappointed climber, troubled to attack, and his attack was deadly.

Wilde rarely mentioned any particular work of art, and when he did he was uncertain and "literary." He was primarily a word-lover and conversationalist; his visual sense seems to have been subnormal. He was concerned more with people looking at beautiful things than with the things themselves, more with the response than the stimulus. Only in "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" did he really see his surroundings as themselves and not just as pegs for the rich tapestries he wove in his word-drunk mind.

Were Wilde's critical ideas as novel and important as his Continental admirers claim; was his social comment much more than a mechanical reversal of Victorian assumptions, a kind of inverted Podsnappery? May not his reputation abroad depend partly on unfamiliarity with the language he used so brilliantly, on inability to detect the absence of resonances?

What lives on is first the legend of the man himself, the greatest talker since Johnson and one of the most interesting characters; secondly a few small things perfectly done—the best farce in the language, a melodramatic ballad lifted out of its class by the force of the indignation behind it, like Browning's Sonnet on Fitzgerald, epigrams expressing wittily and memorably ideas already in the air.

Mr. George Woodcock, in *The Paradox of Oscar Wilde*, while admitting and explaining Wilde's weaknesses, argues forcibly that he was the quarry from which later and more systematic thinkers have pilfered. His main interest is in Wilde as a social philosopher, and he claims him for "liberal socialism," apparently a kind of philosophic anarchism. It is certainly true that Wilde has a quick sympathy for the underdog and immense kindness; he was a warm man. That does not prove he knew why underdogs exist or how to help them over stiles. Surely "The Soul of Man Under Socialism," on which Mr. Woodcock bases much of his case, is the work of a lively mind operating outside its usual range, not a solid contribution to political thought. Mr. Woodcock overrates the amount of satire in the plays. The jokes at politicians were intended not to wound but to tickle an audience drawn from the class they were aimed at. They were the kind of jokes that politicians off duty make about themselves.

It is interesting to compare Mr. Bernard Berenson's *Sketch for a Self-Portrait* with the picture of Wilde as revealed by himself and his commentators. Although

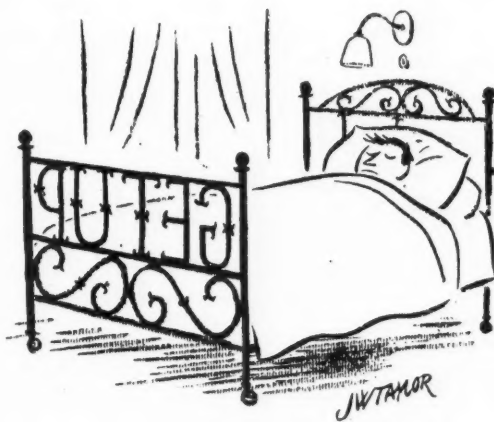
Wilde showed some signs of deepening and broadening before he died at forty-four, it is difficult to believe he would ever have attained the maturity Mr. Berenson shows in this superb fruition of his old age. If he had had Mr. Berenson's scholarship he might have been a better critic; if he had had Mr. Berenson's self-knowledge he might have been a better man. If he had had both nothing would have been beyond him. The two men in their youth were lovers of Conversation, Society and Art; the difference was in the relative importance they assigned to them.

As a critic Mr. Berenson always led his readers close up to actual paintings and drawings. His real interest was in the history of the relations of Civilization and Culture; but he feared dilettantism so much that by sheer will-power he made himself into a technical expert on one narrow, though crucial, part of the field. Now, with a lifetime of general reflection and specific research behind him, he has turned to examine himself and to comment on life as seen through the temperament he analyses.

Though some of his remarks on his time show the distaste with which the old necessarily regard a world driven by their juniors, his criticism is broad-based and wise. It is right that the old should weigh their time against the past while the young weigh it against the future. However, even those of his reflections that start as if they were going to be the platitudes of senescence end with the freshness that a lifetime of intense critical activity can preserve. Mr. Berenson's frequent alterations in his attributions of pictures, almost as if, curators have sometimes complained, he maliciously enjoyed making them change their labels, are at least evidence of continual movement of mind.

Mr. Berenson's subtly constructed picture of himself in his world mingles the bitter honesty of Barbellion with the insight and oversight of Montaigne. He even discusses why people dislike him, investigating the truth with passion yet pausing to consider how far he is being over-modest. Arrogantly and securely he challenges the great autobiographies of the past.

R. G. G. PRICE



A Not So Large Back Room

Mr. Nigel Balchin seems to be in need of fresh fields. *A Sort of Traitors* runs *The Small Back Room* too close, and is not so good a story. It has a serious theme, the conflicting loyalties of a scientist to his country and to the world, but it deals with this superficially and the end is inconclusive. After long research a famous professor has got far enough with a plague-preventive to wish to pass on his discoveries to his international colleagues; and the British Government, more conscious than he that what can be used in mercy can equally be a military weapon, bans publication. This is certainly a situation well worth discussing, but even a man who only read the headlines once a week would be less innocent about the state of affairs in which we live than are Mr. Balchin's biologists. His novel is filled out to no great purpose with a twisted triangle consisting of a clever adolescent, a somewhat indeterminate girl and a bitter Irishman who has lost all his limbs in a cause which he hates.

E. O. D. K.

Çalikuşu

It is a thousand pities that Sir Wyndham Deedes, so felicitously translating *The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl* by Reşat Nuri Güntekin, could not have shortened the book's hoydenish prelude in Istanbul and passed on more speedily to its heroine's engrossing adventures in Anatolia. "Çalikuşu" (Little Wren), as the high-born Moslem scapegrace of a congenial French convent-school, is rather a little bore. But she acquires a teacher's diploma there, and ideas of her own. So when her cousin and fiancé, Kâmrân, is rumoured to have played her false, she sets out to live her own life in a series of little up-country schools. Between the moment when her peasant foster-mother abets her escape and the death of the delightful old doctor, whose proffered *mariage blanc* saves her from the pitfalls that beset inexperienced girls, five years elapse. They are five years of a life so generously dedicated and so cruelly misunderstood that its spiritual growth is as absorbing as its material dilemmas.

H. P. E.



A Minor Čapek

Whether or no Karel Čapek was a really great writer is a moot point; but his wisdom, lightly carried, sets him in the right line of the humanists. Erasmus or Voltaire might have hailed him as a younger brother. Many of the *Apocryphal Stories* which Miss Dora Round has ably translated into a colloquial English, to match, presumably, a colloquial Czech, are examples of his particular quality; but they are not among his major works. They are little more than engaging brevities, a minor contribution to the age-old literature of hypothetical history. They start, in fact, in pre-history, with Prometheus and neolithic man, and Napoleon is their most recent protagonist—though there are implicit references to despots still more recent. Meanwhile we have heard what Alexander and Pilate and Diocletian and Goneril have to say for their policies, and have assisted, in what is perhaps the collection's masterpiece of irony, at the death-bed of Don Juan.

F. B.

Barbed Wire

When the history of the twentieth century comes finally to be written it is probable that one of the most remarkable psychic factors to be taken into consideration will be the effect on so many thousands in all countries of the loss of personal liberty. *The Cage* is an account of life in three successive Italian prisons, and, although some of the worse features of German and—still more—Japanese captivities are missing, the picture is sufficiently grim. Hunger, monotony, vermin, lack of privacy and even elementary decency, are bad enough; and even when certain of these are mitigated, the mental and spiritual distresses consequent on the herding together of a chance collection of men bring with them their own peculiar problems. To what extent the book is fact or fiction is not quite plain; certain indications seem to suggest the latter. But, be it fiction or fact, it is quite plainly the outcome of deep and bitter personal experience.

C. F. S.

Books Reviewed Above

The Paradox of Oscar Wilde. George Woodcock. (Boardman, 15/-)

Sketch for a Self-Portrait. Bernard Berenson. (Constable, 10/-)

A Sort of Traitors. Nigel Balchin. (Collins, 9/6)

The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl. Reşat Nuri Güntekin. (Allen and Unwin, 15/-)

Apocryphal Stories. Karel Čapek. (Allen and Unwin, 7/6)

The Cage. Dan Billany and David Dowie. (Longmans, 9/6)

Other Recommended Books

Stevenson's Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases. Selected and arranged by Burton Stevenson. (Routledge, £4 4/-). Over 2,600 pages of them, set out to show chronological development from the first expression of the idea to the modern form (which may be a pun or other joke), with authorship, source, date, and originals of many of the translations; arranged by subject, lavishly indexed in 300 additional three-column pages. A truly monumental work, inexhaustibly useful to refer to and entertaining to read.

The Holiday. Stevie Smith. (Chapman and Hall, 8/6) Odd, touching little story by the author of *Novel On Yellow Paper*, in her unique, poetically artful, deceptively comic, allusive, wistful, penetrating manner.

FAN MAIL

I WAS in Persia at the time, rather remotely in Persia, and it was very hot. So when I took a month's leave and went to Bombay and saw a little electric-light machine that not only provided light but worked a fan, I remembered the heat and the remoteness and bought one. In due course the machine and I arrived at this very hot and remote place, the necessary wiring, etc., was effected by a Sikh, who then departed and it only remained to start the engine and switch on the fan and of course, when requisite, the lights. I turned the handle, but with no effect. Several of my Kurds, enormous men of great strength, turned the handle, but it was only after the twentieth Kurd that the engine started. Nineteen of them were uttering strange Islamic oaths in the little courtyard in the corner of which the engine was housed.

And so it was, day after day and night after night. Gigantic men went in a mass of resolution and after a fiery interval staggered out a mask of perspiration. I never knew it start in less than eight Kurds. And once the whole twenty-five were expended and I had to fall back on a passing Bakhtiari.

When I left that hot and remote place in Persia I sold the electric-light plant to a business gentleman operating rather nearer the coast. I went to see him a little later and I found him, very hot indeed, trying to start the engine. He looked a little wistfully at me and said "Did you ever have any trouble in starting this thing?" I said "No," because, you see, I didn't have any trouble, though, in a way, the Kurds had, and, just once, that Bakhtiari.

Then he handed me the Book of Instructions and, as he prepared for what must have been about the millionth turn, he said "Would you mind reading the Instructions while I turn?" I said "Not at all," and, seating myself rather comfortably in the shade, I opened the book at page one. The handle-turner looked expectant.

"One touch of the handle," I read, "and the house is flooded with light. . . ."



"I remember seeing them when they were untrained."

YOU AND TOURISM

AFTER a fairly close study of all the relevant documents* I am driven to the conclusion that, in 1948, 7,528,000 copies of one hundred and fifty-nine publications, many in several languages, were distributed to the travel trade and to potential visitors to Britain all over the world, and that 268 million "Come to Britain" messages were placed before travel-minded foreigners. The exact number of those who answered the call was 504,364, or roughly one visitor to every fifteen publications and every five hundred and thirty-six "Come to Britain" messages. And this, I maintain, is a fair average when you

*Including the twenty-first Annual Report of the Travel Association.

consider how often people have to be told the simplest things.

Last year the traffic in tourists brought in about forty-seven million pounds, and nearly thirty per cent. of this sum came from American visitors in dollars. Thus, tourism was again our largest single export to the U.S.A., our best dollar-earner. It came as a great shock to me, many years ago, to be told that the Swiss live almost entirely on things called invisible exports. My opinion of them fell sharply, for I was an ambitious young man and quite contemptuous of such blind-alley occupations as waiting, guiding and yodelling. Now, I am chock-full of admiration for the Swiss: they do things so much better than we do.

The trouble with our tourist traffic is that nearly all of it hits us at the same time—ninety thousand and more visitors in July and August, and a mere ten or twenty thousand a month from October to April. I believe that foreigners choose July and August for their holiday months in Britain because they've heard such a lot about our so-called staggered holidays. They assume that Britain is cluttered up with her own holiday-makers in the other months, and they've somehow got it into their heads that July and August are our driest, sunniest months, whereas anyone who reads the posters and handbooks put out by the holiday resorts knows perfectly well that they're the wettest, coldest and most susceptible to typhoons, gales, blizzards and floods. The Travel Association should put out another few million booklets proving that the staggered holidays idea is a flop, that *hoteliers* and boarding-house keepers are in vile tempers in July and August, and that our wars invariably break out before our August visitors can get home in comfort. The Swiss, as I say, do things better: by clever propaganda they manage to get people to visit them even in the depths of winter.

Last year about ninety thousand of our visitors came from France, eighty thousand from the Empire and Commonwealth, seventy-five thousand from the U.S.A., sixty thousand (each) from Scandinavia and Holland, and forty-odd thousand from Belgium. Only about

twenty thousand came from Switzerland, but they were all readily identifiable by reason of their habits of talking aloud to themselves ("Und here ist der cathedral Saint Paul, fabricated of Christopher Wren . . ." etc.), of making out their own bills in hotels and restaurants, and tipping themselves lavishly at every turn. Now it seems to me—and I am a genuine Francophile, remember—that we have too many French visitors. France can't afford them, nor can we. It's like taking in each other's washing (*blanchissage*). We should try to discourage the French and leave our hotels free for people with hard currency in their pockets. Has the Travel Association any suggestions? It could easily put out a few million "*Ici on ne parle pas français*" notices, I should think; and it could advise the hotels and boarding-houses on methods of producing really bad coffee, wishy-washy salads and soggy cabbage. And the French travel bureau could do the same for us of course—discourage the English visitor by speaking English at him, and by stuffing him with real coffee, real bread and *vin ordinaire*. British Railways have already made a move toward the discouragement of foreign visitors by introducing Tudoresque Taverns on its trains, but this is too sweeping and indiscriminate.

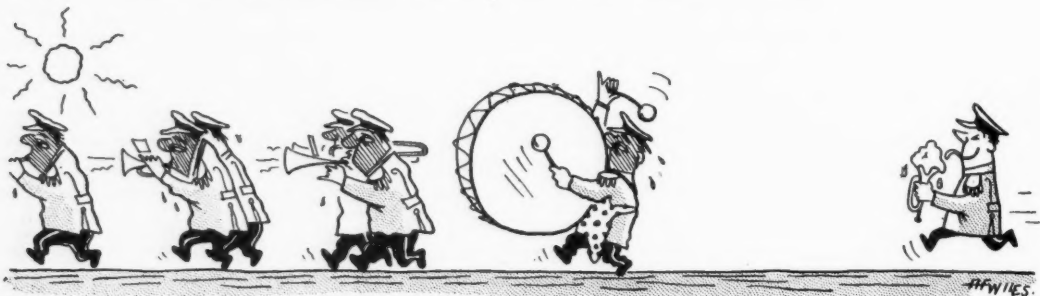
I have room only for one or two further recommendations. American visitors complain that there are not enough souvenirs in British hotels to make their trips worth-

while. One reason for this is the marked increase in domestic kleptomania, and another, our inability to design objects suitable for petty pilfering. We need millions, billions of ash-trays, coat-hangers, teaspoons and so on, and need them urgently. It should not be beyond the powers of the Board of Trade, the Council of Industrial Design, the Travel Association and the Midlands to devise and supply them. They should be really well designed, very cheap (even shoddy) in quality, and clearly labelled "To Be Taken Away." An extra five per cent. on all bills would easily cover the cost. BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

5 5

JOKE'S PROGRESS

WHEN recently a bigwig spoke In Parliament he made a joke; And in the six pip-emma news The B.B.C. broadcast his views, Complete with gag—a killing line Repeated, word for word, at nine. At midnight, too, it reared its head—"For the last time . . ." I, yawning, said; But no—when I awoke, Great Heaven! They served it with the news at seven; At eight, while running for my train, I overheard that quip again; At nine I read it in the Press . . . Quite frankly, I could not laugh less.



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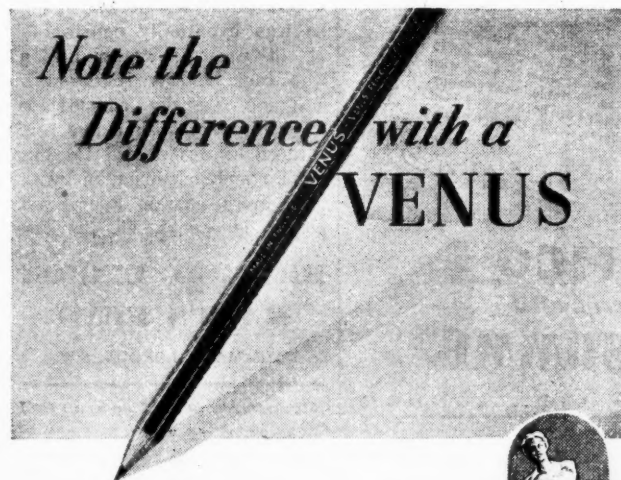


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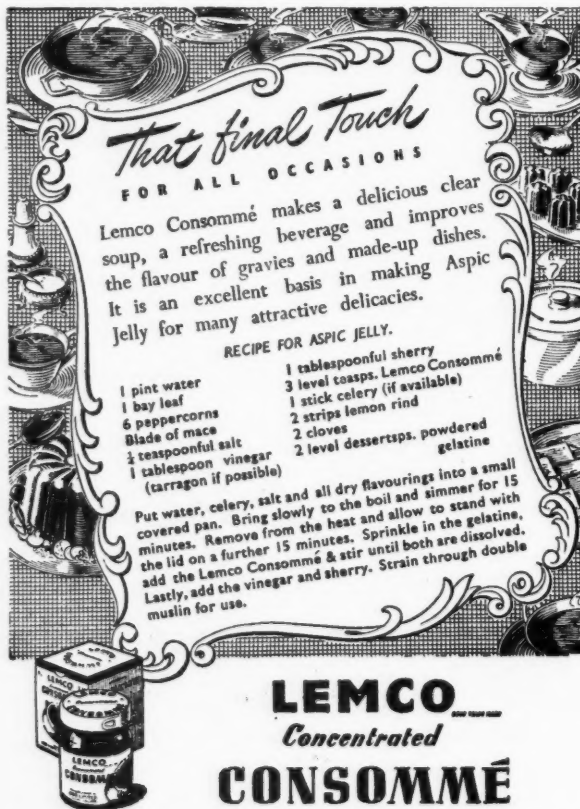


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RECIPE FOR ASPIC JELLY.

1 pint water	1 tablespoonful sherry
1 bay leaf	3 level teaspoons. Lemco Consommé
6 peppercorns	1 stick celery (if available)
Blade of mace	2 strips lemon rind
½ teaspoonful salt	2 cloves
1 tablespoon vinegar	2 level dessertspoons. powdered gelatine
(tarragon if possible)	

Put water, celery, salt and all dry flavourings into a small covered pan. Bring slowly to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to stand with the lid on a further 15 minutes. Sprinkle in the gelatine, add the Lemco Consommé & stir until both are dissolved. Lastly, add the vinegar and sherry. Strain through double muslin for use.

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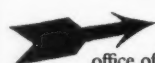
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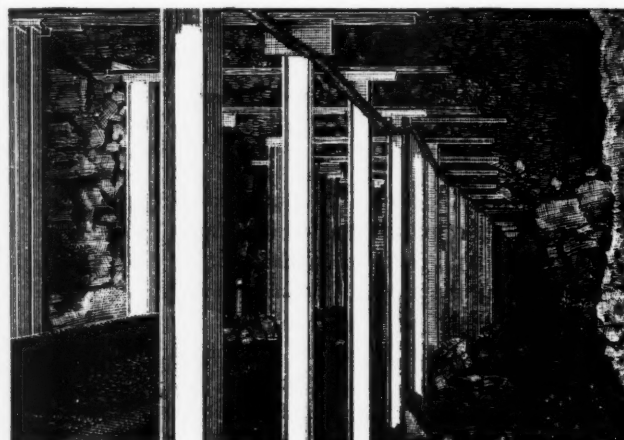


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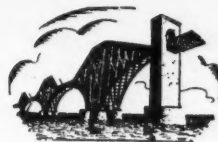


William Nicholson turned to scientific research after a commercial career with the East India Company, and made the historic discovery that water could be decomposed by passing an electric current through it. This is an example of electrolysis which is the foundation of many important industrial and scientific operations. Working in company with another English chemist, Carlisle, in 1800, Nicholson constructed an electric battery (known at that time as a "Voltaic Pile"), from thirty-six half-crowns, and a number of zinc discs and pieces of pasteboard. Though the current produced by this crude apparatus was so minute that only a few thimblefuls of gas were collected over a period of thirteen hours, Nicholson showed not only that water could be electrolysed, but that the two gases of which it is composed appear at different places, the oxygen being evolved where the electric current enters the water and hydrogen where it leaves.

Nicholson, who was born in London in 1753, made many other scientific discoveries between his return from India in 1786 and his death in 1815. He invented a hydrometer, took out patents for textile printing machinery, planned and carried out a scheme for the water supply to Portsmouth. He was a scientific writer of great contemporary eminence and founded, and, until his death, edited the "Journal of Natural Philosophy". But the electrolysis of water, a fundamental discovery of very great importance, remains this Englishman's real contribution to the world's total of scientific knowledge.



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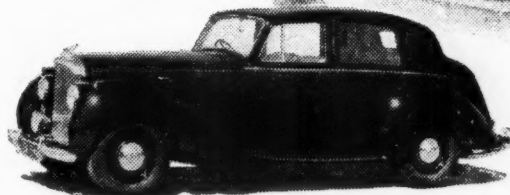
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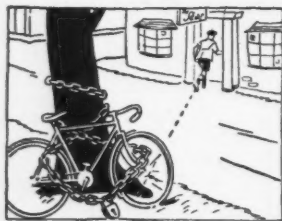


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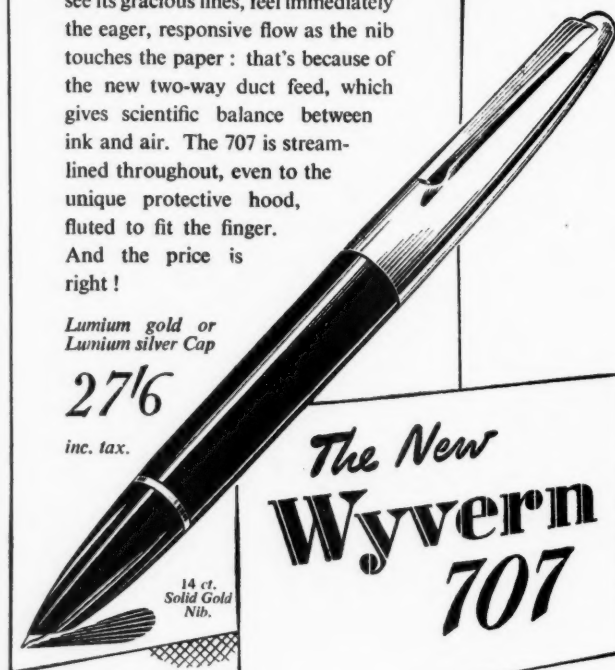
P.13

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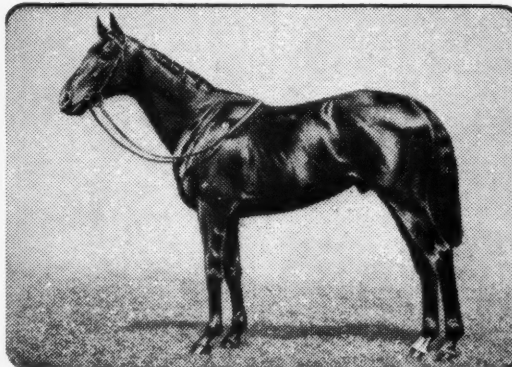
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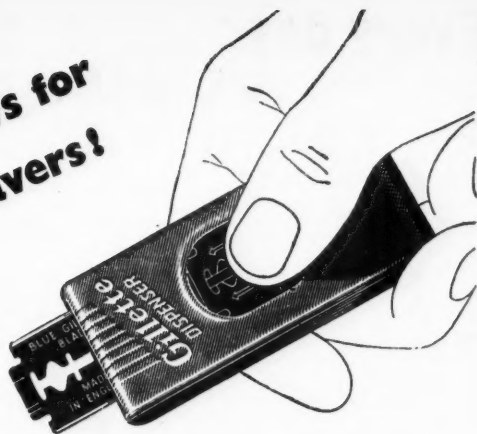
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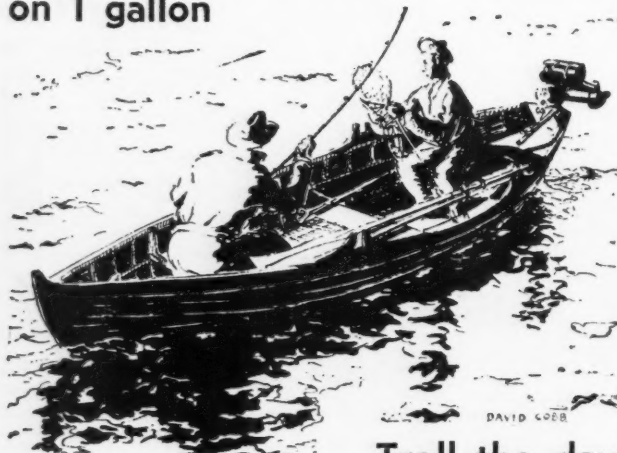
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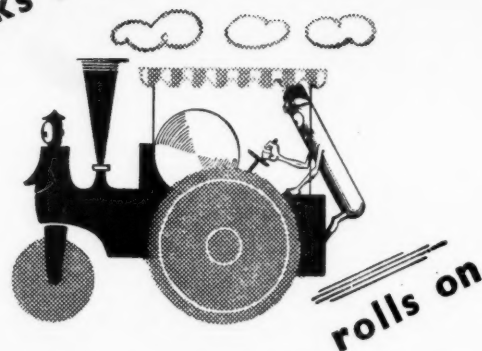
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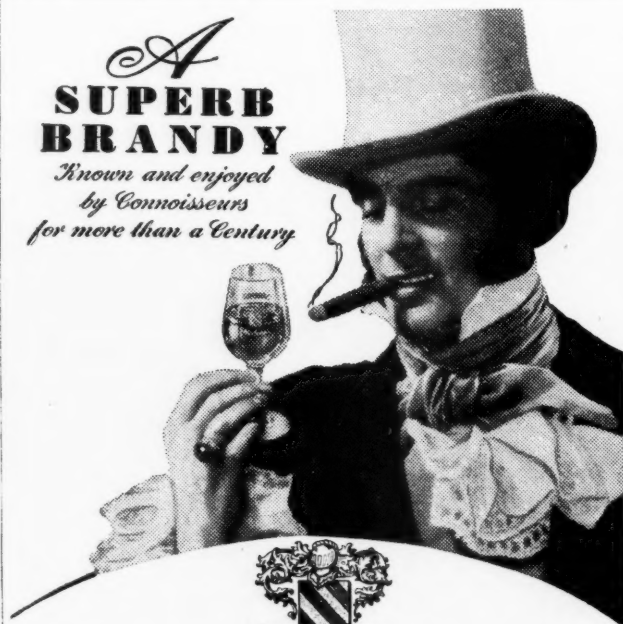
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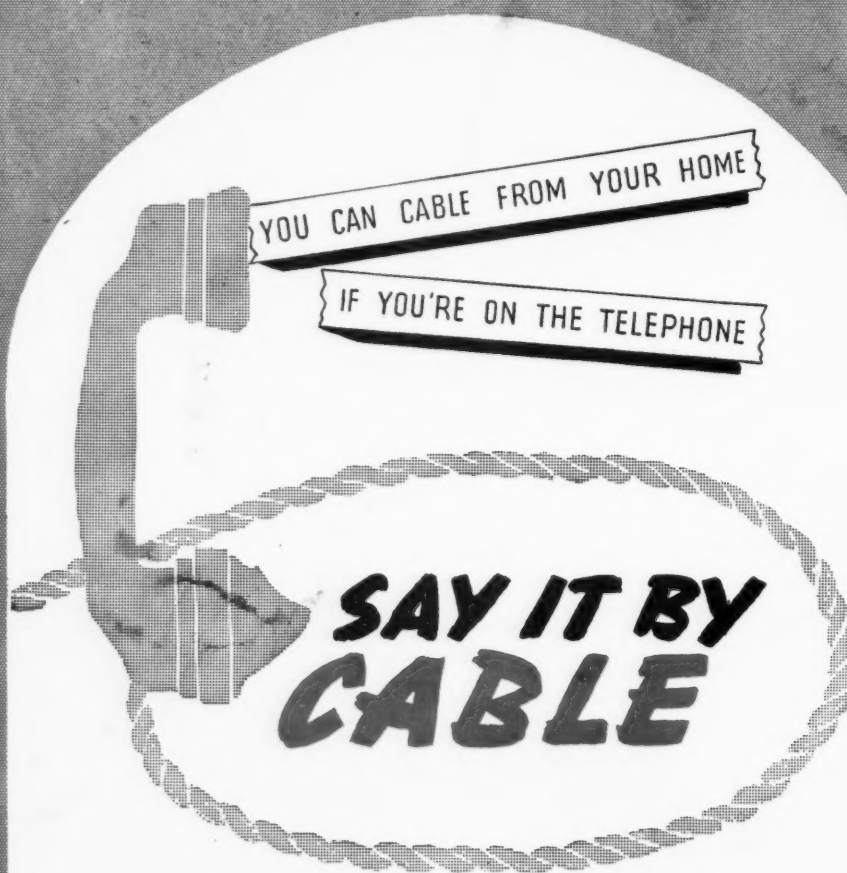
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